



# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE

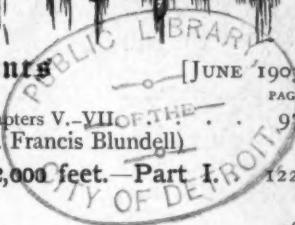
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# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JUNE 1903.

## *Christian Thal.*<sup>1</sup>

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER V.



THE days flew rapidly by, each, as it seemed to Juliet, more full of new and joyous experience than the last. She wrote to her father constantly, describing her doings with graphic humour. The Professor smiled to himself as he read her letters in the morning between his sips of coffee, and sent her brief notes in reply. He was very well; extraordinarily busy; the book was making strides. Horace Bulkeley was a most sympathetic and intelligent companion. He was delighted to hear that

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his baby was enjoying herself, and that she was getting on with her German. He kissed her two dear little cheeks, and hoped they were very plump and pink—and that was all! Sometimes, instead of his last remark about Juliet's cheeks, he bestowed an imaginary kiss upon his favourite dimple. Not a word about Christian or Bobo; no hints of disapproval of the unconventionalities by which she was surrounded; no opinion as to the advisability or the reverse of allowing the promiscuous use of one's Christian name. Juliet sighed, pondered, decided that Daddy was too deep in his work to think of such trivial matters—and let herself go with the tide.

One evening she and the Countess were returning in high spirits from the Opera House, where Juliet had, for the first time, witnessed the performance of 'Carmen.' Count de Galphi, who was suffering from a cold, had prudently remained at home; and his wife, clutching Juliet's arm, had announced that they were quite capable of taking care of themselves. She was now entertaining her at the top of her voice, and in a variety of languages, with certain reminiscences of an enlivening kind. Juliet, in spite of her amusement, was somewhat abashed at the frequency with which the passers-by turned to look at them, and in spite of a paroxysm of laughter was constrained to haul her companion on by main force when she paused to treat her to an accurate representation of the goose-step as practised by certain German soldiers.

They had almost reached their own quarters when her own attention was attracted by the peculiar appearance and gait of a brace of figures at a short distance from them: two men, or youths, tightly linked together, making a slow and very devious progress in the same direction as that in which they were themselves proceeding.

'These seem to be very tipsy fellows,' remarked Madame de Galphi, catching sight of them almost at the same moment. 'They look as if they were quarrelling, too. Let us go slowly and let them get on a little.'

Juliet obeyed, nothing loth, and they loitered behind the pair, who went serpentineing on, pausing occasionally to struggle with each other and then advancing again.

Their voices, eagerly and angrily disputing, came to Juliet's ears all at once, and she started.

'I do believe that's Bobo's voice,' she cried; 'and the other—yes, the other is Christian's.'

'Then I am sorry for it, my dear,' returned the Countess severely, 'for they are both in a most improper state—no doubt about it !'

'No, no—look ! I see what it is. Bobo is trying to get away from Christian all the time, and Christian won't let him go. I don't believe either of them is tipsy,' she added after a moment's eager scrutiny. 'Christian seems to be trying to get Bobo home, and Bobo seems to want to go in another direction. Do you see ?—he won't turn down our street.'

The Countess, immediately fired with curiosity, quickened her pace, dragging Juliet along with her, and soon came up to the corner where the pair of disputants, still tightly linked together were carrying on a fierce and heated argument.

'*Vous tombez du ciel*,' exclaimed Christian under his breath as they came up with him. 'Quick, quick ! say you are going home to supper with him. He wants to drown himself. I have just dragged him back from the river. He must be kept at home at any price.'

'Had he not better come to supper with us ?' inquired Madame de Galphi, unconsciously adopting his low, hurried tone.

'No, no, that would not do. He might start up and run away at any moment. As your host he could not. Quick ! say you are coming.'

'But what is the matter ?' gasped the poor lady.

'There is not time to tell you now. It was at the class ; the Professor—— But no, I dare not. I have not left him for a moment ever since.'

The unhappy Bobo had drawn back a little at the sight of the ladies, his friend still clutching him by the arm, and, after a tragic gesture which had seemed to forbid them to accost him, had covered his face with one large hand. Christian now pulled him forward with a kind of spasmodic cheerfulness.

'These ladies are coming to supper with you to-night, Bobo,' he cried. 'Is it not so, madame ?'

'Certainly,' responded the Countess, vaguely hilarious ; 'to be sure ! Juliet and I have been to the theatre, and we feel it would be dull to have supper by ourselves ; besides, we—we are *en train*, you see. We came out to enjoy ourselves, and we haven't had enough yet.'

'Ha !' said poor Bobo, rolling his eyes towards her. 'You are too good, madame ; you honour me too much. But I—alas ! Christian, explain.'

Here he wrenched himself free and started off across the street at a kind of clumsy gallop. Christian followed him at a bound, caught him up, hooked on to him again, and silently dragged him back.

‘He will be delighted, madame,’ he said emphatically. ‘He is, as he says, too much flattered. Don’t be a fool, Bobo,’ he added in a stage whisper. ‘How have you the effrontery to be uncivil to these ladies? Que diable! There would be plenty of time for you to drown yourself afterwards.’

This argument seemed to have a certain weight with Bobo, who suffered himself to be propelled onwards for a few steps. Madame de Galphi, catching at the suggestion, hastened to follow it up.

‘Certainement,’ she cried, ‘chez nous en Angleterre quand un homme va être *pondu* on lui donne toujours un très bon déjeuner.’

In spite of her accent the meaning of her consolatory words penetrated to the victim’s inner consciousness, and he walked on with docility for the most part, though every now and then his anguish became too much for him and he would make a spasmodic attempt to escape; Christian was invariably on the lookout, however, and brought him back after each digression with apparently undisturbed equanimity. By-and-by, profiting by his friend’s momentary abstraction, Christian turned towards Juliet and held up a paper bag.

‘Our supper,’ he breathed in a scarcely audible whisper. ‘You will have to bring something to eat too. There are only two sausages here, and I daren’t let him go.’

Juliet seized the first opportunity of imparting this piece of advice to the Countess, who was much excited, and secretly charmed with the whole enterprise.

‘Of course, of course,’ she said. ‘I don’t suppose the poor fellow could afford to give us anything to eat, to begin with. But what have we got, Juliet? Is there anything in the cupboard?’

‘We can buy some brödchens at the corner of our street,’ cried Juliet. ‘And there is some foie gras at home, and biscuits —there are plenty of biscuits.’

The whole party presently halted at the baker’s shop, even Bobo so far relaxing as to become gloomily interested; and there the Countess purchased sundry appetising little rolls and cakes, after which they continued their progress.

'I'll go upstairs with them, my dear,' she whispered eagerly as they entered the house ; 'I must stick to him, you see, or he might change his mind again. You go and forage. If the Count is there, tell him he had better go to bed.'

Her eyes were shining with excitement, her cheeks flushed, her capuchon rakishly tilted to one side ; she was enjoying herself enormously.

Juliet nodded and turned into the little dining-room, leaving the other three to march solemnly up the stairs.

To her relief the Count was not in the adjoining room having forestalled his wife's counsel and already betaken himself to his couch. She turned on the electric light and rummaged the cupboard, having already secured the biscuits and foie gras, when the sound of rapid steps behind her made her start, and turning round she saw Christian. He paused opposite to her, looking somewhat sheepish.

'He—Bobo—has got no fire up there,' he remarked diffidently. 'Countess de Galphi said I was to bring up some fuel.'

'There is the coal-box,' said Juliet. 'Is it too heavy for you ? And here is a newspaper to light the fire with. But we must have some wood. Joy ! here is an old box in a corner of the cupboard. That will do splendidly, won't it ?'

Christian nodded gaily. His diffidence was gone and his eyes were dancing.

'I left the Countess and Bobo preparing the table,' he said. 'She was hunting in his wardrobe for a large white pocket-handkerchief ; but most of his are coloured, and they have all got holes in them.'

Juliet laughed. 'Lena is in bed, I suppose, and will have locked up all our belongings too. But why does he want to drown himself ?' she added, becoming serious all at once as, armed with provisions and fuel, they made their way to the door.

Christian's face changed and he set down his coal-box.

'Ah, there was a terrible scene at the class to-day—le malheureux Bobo ! I don't know what took him, but he imagined to himself to play his Beethoven. Judge a little—before he had even had a lesson in it. He has moments of inconceivable folly, that fellow. Well, Bobo and Beethoven—you can figure to yourself what an effect they made. The Maestro was quite quiet for a little. Then he jumped up and seized Bobo by the shoulders, so as to turn him round ; then rushed across the room and threw himself on his knees before Beethoven's statue in the corner. "Forgive, Master,"

he cried, turning up his face and raising his clasped hands—"forgive, forgive." You can imagine poor Bobo. Why are you laughing?' he added, reproachfully.

'I am not laughing,' she retorted; 'at least, I don't mean to laugh—I don't want to laugh. You are laughing yourself,' she concluded sharply.

'That's just it; no one can help it. And it was the same to-day—we all laughed. It was irresistible. If you had seen the Maestro! But all the same it was horrible—cruel! Poor Bobo sat and gasped, and then got up and rushed out of the room. I went out after him, and found him raving in the street and saying he would not survive. I have not left him for a second since. But it will not last—he will cheer up.'

'And you—how did you get on to-day?' inquired Juliet as he took up his burden.

'Oh, with me it went very well. I have had two lessons since, you know—since the last class I mean. The first day he scarcely spoke at all; the second time he nearly tore me to pieces, but I was very meek. It took some courage to propose to play to-day, but I did, and he was not in one of his worst humours. When I went to the piano he said, very sarcastically, "Here comes the music-maker by excellence." So I paused, and bowed, and said, "And there sits the musician-maker by excellence."'

'And was he pleased?' asked Juliet eagerly as she toiled up the stairs in his wake.

'He scowled and snarled, but I think he liked the *mot*. He let me play without interruption.'

At this moment clattering steps were heard on the flight above them, and Bobo's head was thrust over the balusters.

'But make haste, Christian! What are you doing since an hour? The Countess is shivering.'

'We come, we come!' cried Christian. 'Have you found a tablecloth yet?'

'No—at least, yes; I think I have an idea.'

The dishevelled head disappeared, and the clumsy boy's feet went hammering up stairs again; in spite of himself there were certain indications of unwilling exhilaration about poor Bobo, which Christian was quick to notice. He turned a radiant face over his shoulder towards Juliet.

'Already it goes better!' he cried jubilantly.

Madame de Galphi's voice sounded through Michotte's open door as they arrived panting on the topmost landing.

'Cut it ! Certainement pas ! What are you thinking of ? Look here ; it is quite wide enough like this, and we can double the rest underneath.'

'But unfortunately, madame, it will make a lump. Ah, I have an idea. This table has a drawer—do you see, madame ? We will shut the neck and sleeves inside.'

'*Je vous fais mes compliments*,' said the Countess, laughing ecstatically. '*Vous êtes très habile, Monsieur Bobo.*'

Bobo was modestly disclaiming as Juliet and Christian entered the room, but there was an air of unmistakable triumph on his face. He and the Countess were busily covering the table with a spotless white cloth. It was a somewhat peculiarly shaped cloth ; double to begin with, of sloping form, and having two little gussets perceptible just where it dropped from the edge of the table on one side. As the newcomers approached, Madame de Galphi hastily enclosed what appeared to be a superabundance of material in the table-drawer. Christian gave one glance at it and discreetly averted his eyes.

'The first thing to be done is to light a fire,' he remarked cheerfully. 'If you would superintend, Juliet, I think I could manage it.'

As they bent over the stove together he whispered :

'The tablecloth !—have you observed the tablecloth ? It is—it is'—almost choking with suppressed laughter—'it is a night-shirt !'

'Now, Monsieur Bobo,' called the Countess imperiously, noting certain symptoms of relapse on his part, 'come and help me ; we haven't half finished. Where are your sausages ? No, you can't leave them just in a paper bag—that would spoil the illusion. Haven't you got a plate ? No ? Oh, we must invent something. Excellong, mag-ni-fique idée ! Now another. I said you were a garçon d'esprit. . . . Now, Messieurs les convives, vous êtes servis.'

The fire was crackling pleasantly by this time, and Juliet and Christian, rising from their knees with alacrity, approached the table. The Countess stood on one side, with her capuchon slipping ever farther and farther away, and waving her hand with triumphant flourishes towards the repast ; while Bobo, a little in the rear, was unable to resist an apologetic chuckle. In the centre of the improvised tablecloth was set forth the bottom of a soap-dish, across which the two sausages were delicately balanced, and which was flanked on either side by the pot of foie gras and

a symmetrical heap of brödchens. The biscuits were disposed in circles at either end of the table, and two paper-knives and plates of folded writing-paper concluded preparations which were felt to be as elegant as they were original.

Juliet and Christian were loud in their praises of these ingenious contrivances ; the Countess hastened to disclaim all credit in the matter, and Bobo was obviously conscious of a thrill of pride. Indeed, when the ladies had taken possession of the chairs, and he, after attending to their wants, had seated himself beside Christian on the bed, he unwittingly began to swing his long legs with childish satisfaction.

What a ridiculous meal that was !

The sausages, judiciously sliced with pocket-knives, and served up on brödchens cut in half, the foie gras spread with paper-cutters, the biscuits respectfully handed on paper dishes and incontinently sliding off. The two boys perpetually hopped off and on the bed, rushing at the ladies between every mouthful with some fresh attention or suggestion, tumbling over each other in their eagerness, and varying the entertainment every now and then by mock quarrels and abortive passes at each other with the paper-cutters. Bobo's eyes began to sparkle under their swollen lids, his voice became more and more animated, and he greeted Christian's sallies with enthusiastic laughter.

Once, indeed, the mirthful harmony seemed in danger of dissolution. The Countess, in describing the performance at which she and Juliet had that evening assisted, chanced to remark that her pleasure had very nearly been spoilt by an irritating neighbour, who had every now and then annoyed her by humming the finest airs under his breath.

' And what did you do, madame ? ' inquired Christian, frowning in sympathy.

' Oh, I just glared at him, and said very distinctly to Juliet how tiresome it was, and how I hoped he would stop.'

' Ah, I have a better plan than that,' returned he. ' I generally turn to my irritating neighbour with a very amiable smile. "Sir," I say, "you have a very pretty voice!" The poor wretch generally falls into the trap. "But no, Monsieur; indeed I have no voice at all." "Then why do you sing?" I ask. Ah—you understand—he begins to look foolish and is glad enough to keep quiet.'

It was at this juncture that Bobo uttered a hollow groan and buried his face in the pillow.

' Holà ! what is the matter ? ' cried his friend, tugging at his shoulders,

'Go away ! You are a monster ! you turn the dagger in the wound !'

And Bobo wallowed in the pillow and groaned again. After a pause of dismay, Christian again put his hand on the broad shoulder, eliciting fresh lamentations.

'You have no heart, va ! How would you like to be made to look foolish ? I can assure you it is not pleasant !'

Christian paused, looked blankly round as though seeking a means of escape, and suddenly cried out as if in consternation :

'These ladies have nothing to drink ! Quick, Bobo, quick ! Imagine something. Your honour as host is at stake.'

Michotte sat up, thinking a moment, and looking extremely rueful with his hair standing on end ; then, jumping up, he ran to a shelf in one corner of the room, and produced a small tin of coffee and another of condensed milk ; then from behind the stove he drew forth with a flourish an extremely black and much battered little saucepan.

What cooking ensued, how much discussion, how much excitement ! And how extremely nasty was the compound that was finally poured into Bobo's solitary tumbler !

The Countess promptly and candidly delivered her opinion of this decoction, and immediately made over her share of it to Juliet ; the remainder being kept simmering on the top of the stove until the glass should be passed on to the young men.

'He has ideas,' remarked Christian, looking fondly and proudly at his friend—'he has ideas like nobody else. What do you think, madame, he imagined to himself the other day ? We were walking together along the Graben. I had been talking, as I often do'—with a droll apologetic look—'about the mysterious attraction which the possessor of a great talent exercises over his fellow-men, about the ease with which such an one can draw together crowds, when he suddenly said : "I will undertake to collect a crowd without playing a note, or saying a word, or doing anything in the least wonderful." He looks up and down the street with a very important air, draws a piece of string from his pocket, and gives me one end to hold. "You stand there," he says, "and when I make a sign to you put it down on the ground as if we were measuring it." So off he goes, *toujours d'un air très affairé*, until he is about twenty paces away—which is the limit of his string, you understand—when he turns round and pops down his end of cord on the ground. I do the same. He looks along the string frowningly, nods, waves his hand to me, and walks on again. I follow

his example. At the end of another twenty paces he stops and recommences. The passers-by begin to look round, then to draw near, then to ask questions. He waves them aside imperiously, being too much occupied, you understand, to attend to them; then on he goes, followed by twenty or thirty people. At the end of another twenty paces, *même jeu*—his face always solemn, pre-occupied, rather anxious. I naturally follow suit. More and more people gather round us. “Something has gone wrong with the electric light,” says one. “No, it is the waterworks,” cries another. “I fancy it must be the telephone,” exclaims a third. Bobo appears not to hear any of them, continues to nod and frown to himself, makes cabalistic signs to me—to which I respond to the best of my ability—and finally jerks the string out of my hand, rolls it up, puts it in his pocket, and then, just as the traffic is in danger of being seriously impeded, he remarks in a loud voice, “Now it is finished,” takes my arm, and walks away.’

By this time Bobo was so far recovered as to join in the laughter which greeted this anecdote, and to swing his legs once more with evident glee.

‘Ah, c'est un farceur, allez !’ went on Christian, stimulated to further effort. ‘Last week, again, in the picture-gallery—you remember, Bobo ?’

Bobo giggled appreciatively.

‘He suddenly said to me,’ continued Christian : “Now I am going to be an Englishman.” You know he cannot speak a word of English ; but he clasped his hands behind his back, held himself very stiff and straight, and began to speak—in quite an English voice, I assure you—a most extraordinary jargon, with “Oh yes” at intervals. I don’t know how he managed it, but it really did sound like English. People began to follow us round and to say, “What can he be ? He has a strange accent. He is certainly an Englishman, but it is impossible to understand a word he says.”

Michotte sat with his eyes cast down, smiling to himself.

‘Now, I cannot believe that,’ said the Countess, laying down the paper-knife with which she had been spreading foie gras, and turning laughingly round.

‘Bobo,’ cried Christian imperiously, ‘this lady does not believe in you—you must give her a sample of your prowess.’

‘Oh, do, do !’ cried Juliet ecstatically. Bobo got off the bed for probably the fortieth time that evening, clasped his hands behind him, and, with head thrown back and shoulders stiffly set, began to parade up and down the narrow space, holding forth

the while in a gibberish which certainly did bear a curious resemblance to the English tongue. His intonation at least was perfect, and the impassive face and magisterial air—faithfully copied, no doubt, from some travelling British magnate—contrasting, as it did, with his own unmistakably Gallic personality, made a combination that was indescribably funny.

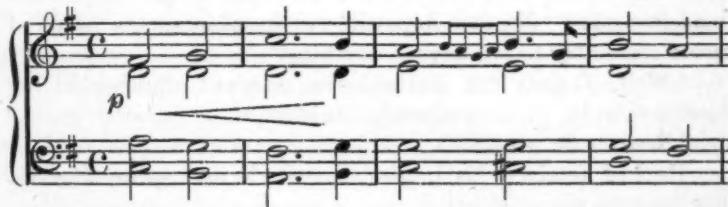
The Countess and Juliet laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks; Christian chuckled and rubbed his hands; only Bobo himself remained imperturbable, and with varying inflections in his strident voice continued his unintelligible harangue.

Christian was in the act of applauding him with loud claps, and the Countess, leaning back in her chair, was testifying to her approval by rapping the edge of the now empty soap-dish with her paper-knife, when the door was suddenly thrown open and Annola Istó entered the room.

‘Christian! are you here, Christian?’ she cried as she advanced. ‘I happened to find myself in the neighbourhood, and thought I would run up here on the chance of finding you. You might walk home with me. It is late, and I do not like—’

The conclusion of the phrase was never spoken. She had been peering about her anxiously and nervously, and now stopped short, almost leaping back and throwing out her hands with an involuntary gesture of surprise and dismay, for at that moment Juliet rose from her seat.

## CHAPTER VI.



A DEAD pause ensued. Christian remained absolutely motionless; Bobo Michotte stood pulling his long fingers and vainly endeavouring to hit upon a remark which should relieve the tension of the situation; and the Countess de Galphi stared with all her eyes at the strange gaunt woman whose unceremonious advent seemed to have cast a blight on the little assembly.

Juliet was the first to regain her self-possession. Pushing

back her chair she made her way to the spot where Annola stood, and held out her hand.

'How do you do, Fräulein Istó?' she said.

Annola mechanically touched her hand, and then let her own drop by her side.

'I did not know you were here,' she muttered, the words hardly intelligible, so stiff and dry were her lips. 'How long—how long have you been in this place?'

'Oh, we have been in Stättingen some time,' returned Juliet quietly, though her heart was beating fast. 'I am staying in this house with the Countess de Galphi.'

She looked towards the Countess as she spoke, and that lady acknowledged the semi-introduction with a stately bow, which would have been more impressive if her headgear, precariously poised as has been said, had not seized the opportunity to slip forward over one eye.

Annola's glance rested on her for a moment, half contemptuously, and then swept round the room, taking in every detail of the curious feast, the general disorder of the poor little place, the dishevelled appearance of the guests; noticing even that Juliet's pretty hands were blackened by her labours in fire-lighting and cooking.

'I did not know you were here,' said Annola again, her gaze reverting to the girl. 'Christian did not tell me. And you, Prospér Michotte,' she added in French, turning to him with sudden anger—'you did not tell me that Miss Lennox lodged here.'

'Mon Dieu!' exclaimed Bobo, with a shrug and a mendacious assumption of carelessness, 'I have such a head, do you see, mademoiselle? No, it is impossible to imagine such a head! I never remember to tell anyone anything.'

'Well, it does not matter,' she returned, drawing in her breath sharply. 'Are you ready, Christian?'

'Ready—for what?'

He had retained his impassive attitude and spoke frigidly, but his eyes glared at her.

'I wish you to come home with me,' she said with forced calmness.

'I have not yet finished my supper,' he responded defiantly.

'Then I will wait,' said Annola.

'Will you not at least sit down?' exclaimed Bobo, mindful of the duties of hospitality but making the proposal in a somewhat lukewarm tone.

She looked round mechanically, and Juliet hastily put forward her chair.

‘Pray take this seat—I do not want it, I assure you. I think we are going immediately.’

She looked pleadingly at the Countess; but though the old lady was in the act of winding up her repast, she was not disposed to be hurried; in fact, her resentment towards Annola was only equalled by her burning curiosity.

‘Who is she?’ she inquired in a stage whisper as Juliet took up a position behind her chair. ‘How did you come to know her? Why does she take possession of young Thal? *Eh?* I can’t hear you, child. Never mind, I’ll find out for myself. *Je demande à cette jeune dame*’—Madame de Galphi could never be made to relinquish the practice of conferring brevet rank on her young friend—‘*je demande à cette jeune dame quelles relations vous êtes—vous et Monsieur Thal.*’

‘Madame!’ ejaculated Annola in wrathful astonishment.

‘Dear Countess,’ murmured Juliet, fiery red with embarrassment, ‘Fräulein Istó speaks English quite well. But don’t you really think, if you have finished supper, we might go?’

‘Très bien, ma chère enfant; nous irons dans un moment,’ returned the old lady, loftily ignoring the first hint. ‘Est-ce que c’est votre tante?’ she inquired, abruptly turning to Christian, and designating Annola by a wave of the hand.

‘Non,’ replied he, shooting out the word viciously.

‘Cousine?’

‘No,’ he returned, this time in English, ‘no relation at all. She brought me up.’

‘Ah!’ said the Countess in a satisfied tone. ‘*Je comprends!* Une vieille gouvernante.’

‘Christian, will you not satisfy this lady’s curiosity?’ cried Annola, turning to him suddenly and speaking in her fluent emphatic, rather deliberate Hungarian French. ‘Explain to her the nature of my claim upon you.’

He hesitated for a moment, and then turned to Madame de Galphi.

‘I owe my artistic training entirely to Fräulein Istó. When I was quite a little boy she discovered me, took me to live with her, educated and provided for me. As far as my musical career is concerned, I may say in a word that she has made me.’

He spoke with studied calm, being evidently careful to avoid any ironical emphasis on the words, which in themselves were all

that Annola in her most exacting mood could have desired ; but it would be impossible to describe the iciness of his tone : it made of the enforced tribute an almost cruel act of insolence.

Tears started to Annola's eyes, but she turned her head quickly so that he should not see them.

Bobo, however, took note of her emotion, and hastened to throw himself into the breach.

'Christian, another slice of sausage. Madame la Comtesse, may I not offer you this remaining cake ? Mademoiselle'—turning to Annola, who had now recovered herself—'will you not be persuaded to join our little feast ? There are still—let me see—three biscuits, a bit of sausage, half a roll, and—no, there is no more foie gras. But the biscuits and the sausage are, I assure you, *delicatessen* of the highest order. What, nothing !—not even the roll ?' as she disdainfully shook her head. 'You despise our simple repast !'

'It must indeed have been simple,' returned Annola, speaking hurriedly, and scarcely taking the trouble to think of what she said, being in fact still smarting with her own pain,—'un festin d'anchorite.'

'You may say so,' cried Christian, his pent-up irritation bubbling over at last. 'Il ne nous manque plus même la Tête-de Mort !'

The allusion was too marked to be lost on any of the little company ; even Countess de Galphi felt that it was time to make a move ; the atmosphere was too much charged with electricity to be pleasant.

Juliet gladly followed her out of the room, and Bobo tremulously assisted Fräulein Istó to pull up the wrap which she had loosened. Her lips were quivering, but she glared angrily at his compassionate face through the tears which she would not suffer to fall.

'Say, then, Christian,' he remarked after she had gone downstairs, to his friend, who lingered to light with defiant deliberation a cigarette at the little lamp, 'it was a little strong what you said there.'

'She irritates me too much,' retorted he.

'What an unfortunate accident, hein ? Her chancing to look for you to-night.'

'Accident !' repeated Christian. 'She dogs my steps, she watches my face, she spies out every change of mood. Je suis à bout !'

He stood still for a moment, his hands in his pockets, his frowning gaze looking towards the door ; then—

‘ I will have an end of it ! ’ he cried, and stalked out of the room, banging the door behind him.

‘ Ce pauvre Christian ! ’ ejaculated Bobo, looking anxiously after him. ‘ Ce pauvre diable ! So long as he does nothing imprudent ; but he is so impetuous, so self-willed ! ’

He shook his head sagely, and groaned over his friend’s follies, having quite forgotten his own suicidal intentions of a little while before.

Christian found Annola waiting for him at the foot of the stairs, and the two set forth together in absolute silence.

She did not attempt to take his arm nor to say a single word as they walked along, but now and then, when the light from a street lamp fell across his face, she stole a surreptitious glance at it. It was more statuesque than ever in its stern fixity and pallor. When they reached their lodgings she was conscious of a strong feeling of relief—which was, however, short-lived, for instead of going straight to his own room, Christian opened the door of the meagre little sitting-room where Annola received her pupils, turned up the light, and with formal politeness requested her to come in.

‘ I have a word or two to say to you,’ he added.

‘ Must it be to-night ? ’ she asked, looking round at the fireless room, and shivering, partly with cold, partly with excitement, partly with a curious kind of fear. She was afraid of herself sometimes—of her passionate, undisciplined nature, and the lengths to which it led her ; to-night, too, for the first time in her life, Christian intimidated her. What might not this interview bring forth ? What unforgivable words might be said ! What impassable barriers might be erected !

‘ Yes ; to-night. We must have an explanation, Annola.’

‘ With all my heart,’ cried she ; ‘ I, too, have something to say to you.’

‘ As you can have nothing to tell me which you have not already told me more than a hundred times, suppose I save you the trouble ? ’ he said, in this new tone of frigid insolence which she found so hard to bear. ‘ But I think to-night I have already repeated my lesson without fault. You found me, you made me ; do not think I am likely to forget it. I owe you much, but some day you shall be paid in full—to the last farthing. You should be satisfied with this.’

She stood leaning with both hands on the back of a chair, her eyes fixed on him with a strained look, her lips unconsciously forming the words that he said.

'You understand—I am fully conscious of your claim. Is not that enough ?'

'It is not enough,' she returned in a low voice. 'I have a right to your confidence ; you have deceived me.'

'Now listen, Annola,' he said authoritatively. 'It is as well this point should be made clear between us. I am an artist—yes. I owe the fact of being an artist, possibly, altogether to you. But I am also a man, and with the making of me as a man you had nothing whatever to do. My life, as distinct from my artistic career, is my own ; my youth is my own ; my personal liberty must not be tampered with. My thoughts and hopes are free. The time has come to say these things. I will not be spied upon and interfered with and dictated to. Understand that once for all, Annola. One has but one youth, parbleu !—one life. I will do what I like with mine.'

She made no answer, but he saw her hands tighten round the chair until the finger-tips showed white beneath the nails. His heart smote him for a moment, but he steeled it against her.

'That is all I have to say,' he remarked in an altered tone.

'It is well,' she said. 'I too have learnt my lesson—but it is very hard. It will be very difficult to remember. After all these years, Christian——'

Her voice failed her, and she broke off, putting her hand quickly to her lip to still its trembling. Christian immediately softened, though the first outcome of his emotion was a petulant reproach.

'Then why do you irritate me ?' he cried, springing to her side. 'Annola, you know—it was too much. You—you pushed me to it. You make me out of myself. Naughty Annola, what a face you made us to-night, hein ?—what a face ! Are you not ashamed of it ?'

'Ah, yes, the death's head !' said Annola with a smile that was half sad and half bitter.

'Ah, yes, I said that,' owned Christian penitently ; 'but if you could have seen your face, Annola ! And we had all been so gay—so happy ! Why could you not let us be happy ?'

His tone was tender now and his arm had crept round her.

She yielded a little to his caress, glad to regain his allegiance at any price ; but she did not speak.

'You know,' he said in her ear, 'I must be happy. You must let me—you must.'

Her eyes had drooped beneath their heavy lids, her long lashes almost sweeping her cheeks. Suddenly she looked up with a smile :

'All this because I broke in upon your little réunion?' she cried playfully.

'Annola,' he said seriously, 'do not pretend to be ignorant. *You know.* Oh,' he went on eagerly, 'why are you so hard to me? Why should you oppose me in this—you have been so good to me in far less important things. Let me be happy, Annola. I must live—I must love.'

There was a long pause; she drew away her hand.

'What do you want me to do?' she asked coldly.

'Oh, nothing,' he returned rather irritably. 'Only to leave me alone.'

'Well, I will promise that,' she said.

Again his mood changed and he seized her hand once more. 'You are an angel!' he cried enthusiastically.

## CHAPTER VII.



ONE afternoon in the following week the Countess de Galphi and her young friend happened to be walking in one of the parks, not far from Herr Adlersohn's house.

It was a fine day, cold and sunny, one of those days which insensibly exhilarate, and Juliet almost danced along the glittering frost-bound path between the diamond-spangled clumps of evergreens. She was tripping on in advance of her companion, when suddenly, at an abrupt turn in the path, she almost ran into the great Maestro himself. She had stammered half-way through her apology before she identified him; upon which she became immediately overcome with blushes and confusion.

The old man, however, was not in one of his alarming moods; he nodded and smiled, looked benignly at her pretty, rosy face, and helped her out with her explanation:

Gewiss; it was easily understood: the path turned so sharply just there, and she was doubtless occupied with her own pleasant thoughts. Here he smiled again, peered into her face, and suddenly exclaimed in an even more cordial tone:

'Ah! but I know you, my Fräulein. I have seen you before. You were at my house some weeks ago, nicht? I know it!' he added triumphantly; 'I never forget a face!'

Juliet in the midst of her tremors remembered how Christian had once said the same thing, and wondered if this kind of memory were peculiar to musicians.

The Countess now came up, and at once plunged into the conversation after her own polyglot fashion, to the intense amusement of the great man, who took a malicious pleasure in making her repeat some of her most preposterous phrases; and by artful interpolations induced her to veer about from one tongue to another with even greater frequency than usual. As he stood there, with his hat pushed to the back of his head, and his face puckered into a thousand humorous wrinkles, he looked so good-natured, not to say benign, that Juliet found it hard to reconcile this actual presentment of him with her previously conceived idea.

Turning to her suddenly, he read her thoughts.

'The old eagle is not always savage,' he said, looking at her with twinkling eyes.

There was a certain unconscious roguishness in Juliet's smile, confused though she was, which seemed to please Herr Adlersohn.

'The old eagle is not always savage,' he repeated, surveying her with great favour. 'Sometimes it is even possible to approach his eyrie unharmed. Now, if you were to come to the eyrie

to-morrow, you would find the old bird cooing like a turtle-dove, and all the eaglets at play.'

Turning to Madame de Galphi, he explained that one of his little parties would take place on the morrow. Some of his pupils—only the good ones!—throwing out his finger with a portentous frown at Juliet—would be there in the evening, and would dance, he believed, and play about, and make a great noise.

' Will you come, both of you?' he asked.

' Wollen wir kommen?' cried the old lady. ' Est-ce-qu'un canard vent nager?'

He stared at her for a minute.

' Is it a riddle?' he asked. ' I give it up. I never can guess riddles, and I am personally unacquainted with the habits of ducks. Now, if you had asked me a question about geese I might have been able to answer—I have a good deal to do with young geese.'

' Ah, *méchang, méchang!*' cried the Countess, and she actually had the hardihood to tap his arm playfully with her umbrella.

He only chuckled and walked on, turning after a few paces to shout out :

' Eight o'clock!'

Juliet was delighted at the prospect of being present at one of the famous entertainments of which she had so often heard, and which were the cause of so much heartburning and vexation of spirit among Herr Adlersohn's disciples. Not all, even among the favoured ones, were privileged to be present; in fact, the arbitrariness of his selection was universally recognised. At the forthcoming festivity both Christian Thal and Bobo Michotte were to be present by invitation, though it was well known that recently both had, in their several ways, seriously offended the Maestro; while Rosie Gordon, who was as good as gold and acknowledged by Master and pupils alike to be a credit to the school, was, for no reason at all, left out.

Countess de Galphi was highly elated, and took entire credit to herself for having conducted affairs to this prosperous issue.

' It never does to make a bugbear of a man,' she cried. ' You saw how pleased he was when I chaffed him. My dear, men don't *like* to be taken too seriously. I believe, if all those students didn't look on him as a bogey, they would get on much better.'

All the next day both the old lady and the young one were equally excited, and at eight o'clock punctually they mounted the Master's steps.

A babel of voices greeted their ears on the opening of the door ; a surging mass of young folk blocked the hall ; everyone was determined to be punctual, but no one had dared to arrive too soon.

Presently they seemed to melt away to some extent, and the hubbub diffused itself over the house ; the notes of a piano were heard from an upper storey, jarring with a vigorous waltz measure which had just been struck up in the class-room below ; already some twelve or fifteen couples were revolving in the clear space. Looking round for the Maestro, the Countess and Juliet discovered, to their astonishment, that his were the fingers which supplied the necessary accompaniment to the dance. He nodded good-naturedly as he caught the girl's eye, smiled humorously at the Countess, and continued to hammer out his waltz without a moment's relaxation, occasionally emphasising the strain by a simulated obligato in a somewhat cracked voice.

Christian and Bobo made simultaneous rushes at Juliet from different corners of the room, Christian, with his usual good luck, being the first to arrive, and immediately securing her for his partner. Bobo, looking somewhat crestfallen, halted, shrugged his shoulders, and turned to the Countess with a pleasant smile :

'And you, madame ?' he inquired. 'Will you not honour me by taking a little turn ?'

'Je ne suis pas une si grande sotte que j'ai l'air,' responded the old lady promptly.

The Professor cackled from his music-stool :

'Allez toujours, madame. We are all fools together to-night. My wife is over there, capering with the rest of them.'

'Not a waltz, then,' said she with a jolly laugh ; 'I cannot dance anything more rapid than a mazurka.'

'It shall be a mazurka,' said Professor Adlersohn, instantaneously passing into the required measure, to the surprise and momentary confusion of the young dancers.

The Countess figured away with great zest and activity ; and Bobo, too, in spite of an apparent superabundance of arms and legs, acquitted himself most creditably. Christian and Juliet, for their part, floated round as it seemed on air, the young man throwing into his performance the poetry and passion peculiar to his race.

Juliet, ever quick to apprehend and assimilate, adapted herself with her customary grace to her part in the complicated evolutions which go to make up the real Slav mazurka.

'It seems more like acting than dancing,' she said, laughing, as with a dramatic flourish the music came to an end.

'You should see our Hungarian *czardás*,' cried Christian. 'See, the Maestro is getting up—he is exhausted, the brave old fellow! Come, we'll get Károly to play us a *czardás*—there is a good sprinkling of Hungarians in the room. You must be my partner, of course; you will learn it directly.'

Károly, a black-haired, Jewish-looking boy with a magnificent brow, was forced to sit down at the piano, and looked laughingly round.

In another moment the slow, wailing notes of the *Lassú* were floating from the keys, and a ring was forming round half-a-dozen pairs of Magyar lads and lasses.

'We must put our hands on each other's shoulders,' said Christian in a dreamy tone; 'we must look in each other's eyes—oh! but you must look at me,' as her glance fell before his—'we must think of all kinds of pleasant things, and so we sway lightly until the music quickens.'

Her clear eyes gazed as if fascinated into his. What was it she read there? She began to breathe quickly, to feel frightened. She was about to obey an unaccountable impulse to dart away when the measure altered, became rapid, passionate, furious. She found herself doing all manner of strange things in obedience to Christian's whispered commands: now they were flying round together, now she was whirling apart from him; their hands touched, dropped asunder, joined again; then the music once more slackened, passed into a pathetic minor, and again they were swaying opposite each other and Christian's eyes were looking into hers.

'I think I will go back to the Countess,' said Juliet, as Károly was pushed off the music-stool by Bobo, who began to hammer out a polka. 'It is too hot to dance any more.'

'Come into the garden,' said Christian; 'it is cool enough there; I will get you a cloak. There is moonlight, see—it will be delightful.'

He cloaked her with great care in a fur mantle belonging to somebody else, and they passed through the open window, down the stone steps which led to the garden. Here the grass was white with frost, the evergreens a-glitter, the very gravel spark-

ling in the light of a great majestic moon. Peals of laughter came from the farther corner, where a pretty girl was conducting a dancing lesson, her partner being a somewhat lanky English youth ; one or two other couples were pacing sedately along the paths ; but the arbour was empty. They entered it and sat down in silence. Even in the dusk Juliet felt Christian's eyes upon her, and the consciousness filled her with a sense of constraint, mingled with an odd kind of expectation. The dancing lesson was continued amid little screams of laughter ; across the brilliantly lighted windows of the saloon a stream of revolving figures passed and repassed. All at once Bobo's polka came to an end, and in the interlude a medley of voices and laughter rang out ; then the piano was heard again—no dance-music this time ; somebody was playing Chopin's 'Storm Study.'

Juliet uttered an involuntary exclamation as she identified it.

'Do you not like it ?' inquired Christian. 'It is Károly again ; he plays it well.'

'Yes ; I don't think I mind hearing him play it.'

His quick ears detected the scarcely perceptible emphasis on the pronoun.

'Does that mean that you do not like to hear me ?'

'The last time I heard you I did not like it.'

'I played it so badly ?' queried he, naïvely astonished.

'No, so well—but so wickedly. You made the music wicked.'

'But that was right, surely ?' he cried. 'I was feeling wicked myself that day, and I always put everything that I feel into the music—the bad as well as the good.'

'Ah !' said she, bending forward earnestly ; 'I should like it to be only good. You know you are to preach to the world ; is not that what Daddy said ? "You should use your great power to uplift and purify the world."

'If I ever preach,' said Christian very softly, 'it shall be your gospel.'

He was silent for a moment, and then continued, hesitatingly :

'Lately my music has pleased you, has it not ?—it was all good. Have you not noticed something new in it ? New—and yet as old as the world. Can you not guess ?' he added, leaning forward suddenly. 'Oh, Juliet, it is love !'

She threw out her little hands with an almost childish gesture of alarm.

'But, Christian, I—I know nothing about love !'

‘ You know nothing about love ! But I will teach you. My little white bird, you shall learn my song. Oh ! ’ he cried ecstatically, ‘ to think that I should be the first—the very first. Juliet, you will learn from me, will you not ?—you will let me tell you all about it ? You will not find the lesson very hard.’

‘ But, Christian, we are too young,’ she faltered, her hands fluttering in his, her dilated eyes shining in the dusk.

‘ Too young to marry, perhaps,’ said he; ‘ but not too young to love. We shall live for one another henceforth, you and I. You will inspire me, you will uplift me ; and so, do you see, I will carry out your father’s wish and uplift the world. And some day—some day, when I have conquered the world, I will come and give you again the honours which will have been already yours, for you will have won them all—and you shall give me—yourself. Oh, Juliet ! promise me.’

Before she could answer—and, indeed, words were not readily forthcoming—a rush of feet on the crisp gravel announced that their retreat was about to be invaded, and in another moment Bobo came charging in.

‘ Is it here I find you, Christian ? I have been looking for you everywhere. We are going to have supper. Juliet, it is you ? Madame de Galphi is looking for you. Come along ; I have a wolf’s hunger, moi ! Come along, Christian.’

Christian gripped his arm savagely as Juliet flitted out.

‘ To the devil with thee and thy accursed supper ! ’ he whispered fiercely. ‘ Why art thou for ever thrusting thy detestable long nose where it is not wanted ? ’

‘ A thousand pardons, mon cher,’ gasped Bobo, writhing in his clutch ; ‘ I did not mean to come at the wrong moment.’

‘ The wrong moment, idiot ! It was the supreme moment, the moment of moments, and now you have spoilt it ! ’

Juliet had fluttered away as if she had been indeed the little white bird to which he had likened her ; nor was there again an opportunity for private conversation. Once, when he besought her to dance with him, she answered him, almost imploringly : ‘ Not now ; do not talk to me any more to-night. I must think.’

But she could not think consecutively ; she felt like one in a dream. Throughout the remainder of the evening, indeed, she was conscious of a curious all-pervading sense of unreality. She ate and drank mechanically, danced with the conscience-stricken Bobo and one or two others, laughed at the ridiculous antics of some of the young folk, and responded gaily to the sallies of

Professor Adlersohn, who had evidently taken her into favour; but all the time she had an odd feeling of being somebody else.

At midnight the Frau Professorin locked the piano, and good-humouredly announced that she was going to bed.

'That is what may be called a gentle hint,' said Countess de Galphi. 'Come, Juliet, it is time for us to trot.'

'But the evening is not half over,' cried Károly; 'the Master is in such a good temper to-night—he doesn't want us to go yet. Bobo and I are going to sing a waltz, and Cæsar shall beat time. Quick, Bobo, quick, or these ladies will be going. Tra-la-la-la-la-la.'

'Pom-pom-pom, pom-pom-pom,' obediently chimed in Bobo, the deep bass of whose accompaniment almost overpowered Károly's labouring tenor.

'You go too quick,' cried the latter, breaking off. 'Cæsar! Where is Cæsar? Cæsar, you are wanted to restrain this enthusiast. Here is your bâton,' cramming a Naples biscuit into his unwilling hand. 'Mount quickly on this chair. Now, Bobo, keep your eye on the conductor. Now!'

They were off again; Christian, after a whimsical deprecating glance at Juliet, marking the metre conscientiously with his biscuit. The dancers gyrated with renewed vigour, taking up the strain when Károly grew breathless, and interrupting themselves with bursts of laughter; Bobo's unwearying bass dominated all other sounds.

'Pfui, what a din!' cried the Maestro, raising his fingers to his ears. 'My children, there must be an end of this; the neighbours will be saying that Professor Adlersohn is celebrating his third wedding. Come down, Jungling,' he added, laying hold of the conductor's vigorous arm. 'You had better eat that biscuit; you are the greatest baby of them all.'

Christian dropped his biscuit and jumped down with a somewhat offended air. He was still at the age when it is nothing less than insulting to be taxed with youthfulness. He made his way to Juliet, who had just made her final farewells, and whispered gravely in her ear:

'I am glad this childishness is over. As you may imagine, my thoughts to-night are full of more serious things.'

But Juliet's little tremulous smile had a spice of malice in it, for she had not failed to notice the zest with which the conductor had thrown himself into his part.

Someone coming up at this juncture seized him by the arm.

‘ You have played us nothing to-night, Cæsar. Come to the piano.’

‘ I will not play dance music,’ protested he. ‘ Not now; not to-night.’

‘ The Maestro was not too proud; but play what you like.’

As Christian passed Juliet he bent down to murmur in her ear:

‘ I shall be playing for you—it shall be my heart speaking to yours.’

Yet after he had sat down at the instrument and struck a chord or two his hands dropped from the keys.

‘ To-night,’ he said with a deep sigh, ‘ to-night I cannot.’ Then, as they pressed him, ‘ Look at my hands.’

Indeed, they were shaking oddly.

‘ Thou hast danced too much, my friend,’ cried Károly.

‘ Or drunk too much of the Maestro’s Moselle,’ suggested another.

Bobo cast a searching glance at his friend, blushed violently on meeting his eye, and fell to cracking his fingers in an abstracted fashion.

(*To be continued.*)

## *A Night in the Open at Twenty-two Thousand Feet:*

*BEING AN ACCOUNT OF AN ASCENT OF ACONCAGUA.*

### PART I.

**A**N Argentine gentleman, a member of the Jockey Club in Buenos Aires, sunk in an easy chair in that most gorgeous establishment, asked an acquaintance of mine if I were not mad. My friend replied that he believed I was sane enough. 'No,' said the luxurious Argentine gentleman, sipping his whisky-and-soda; 'anyone who is such a fool as to climb Aconcagua must be off his head!'

Having thus disposed of the matter entirely to his own satisfaction, the luxurious Argentine gentleman lit a fresh cigar, rang for another whisky-and-soda, and put his feet on a neighbouring table.

At first blush there seems a good deal in the argument. Why should any reasonable human being commit himself to any enterprise involving certain suffering and hardship, but bringing neither renown to himself nor advantage to the rest of the world?

When I was struggling, panting and weary, up the steep flank of the mountain, or lying awake at night, with a palpitating headache, in a frowsy tent, I felt convinced that the luxurious Argentine gentleman was entirely correct in his verdict, and that I was in good sooth one of the most suicidal maniacs that ever escaped Hanwell. But now that I am sitting in the comfortable saloon of the Pacific S.N. Co.'s s.s. *California*, I see things in a different light. Even the dumpy white bandages that serve to remind me of ten missing toes cannot persuade me that I had better have left Aconcagua alone. The changes and chances of this mortal life are fairly portioned out; and when I come to

balance my lost toes against the lost livers of the luxurious Argentine gentleman and the rest of his degenerate tribe, I begin to fancy that the advantage is not altogether theirs. I see you, my dear friend of the Jockey Club, a dozen years hence hobbling with gouty feet about the local spa, swilling *præ-prandial* cups of nauseous water and cursing the day you were born ! Then will you look up at the white peaks of the Cordillera, gleaming in the distance, and wonder regretfully how it is that Brown, Jones, and Robinson, who have lost respectively a nose, an ear, and two fingers on the mountains, should yet be sounder men at sixty than you are at forty-five.

Men climb mountains for various reasons ; I climbed Aconcagua on account of its geographical position. Having decided to visit Chile I discovered that the great mountain lay close to the high road between Southampton and Valparaiso ; so close, indeed, that to pass it by unvisited would amount almost to an act of courtesy. Subsequently, I am bound to admit, I was influenced by certain subsidiary considerations. Having procured and read Mr. E. A. Fitzgerald's massy volume on the subject of climbing in the Andes,<sup>1</sup> I felt that to draw back in the matter of the mountain would be to forfeit all my self-respect for ever. I dared not face the remainder of my existence harbouring within my bosom a still small voice for ever murmuring, ' You funk'd Aconcagua. Now, you needn't deny it : you know it as well as I do.' For Mr. Fitzgerald's book is very blood-curdling.

Yet I prefer to it the unvarnished narrative of Sir Martin Conway's ascent of the same mountain in 1898,<sup>2</sup> wherein that distinguished climber tells the story of his success. In five and a half days after leaving the hotel at Baños del Inca he was back there again, victorious, notwithstanding all the horrors of the Horcones torrent and precipices, the terrors of the glacier, and the savagaries of the mountain itself.

When I had read Sir Martin Conway's book my spirits revived, for he says emphatically that the conquest of Aconcagua is nothing but a matter of stamina and endurance. I managed to get an introduction to the author, and Sir Martin most kindly received me in his beautiful house in Kensington. In reply to my question whether I, who had only climbed alone in the Himalayas and the Rocky Mountains, after snow-leopards, ibex, and big-horn sheep, and had never even seen a Swiss guide, could

<sup>1</sup> *The Highest Andes*, by E. A. Fitzgerald.

<sup>2</sup> *Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego*. Cassell & Co.

possibly hope to get, with a native, to the top of Aconcagua, Sir Martin said, 'Yes; go straight at it, and you'll do it all right,' meaning thereby that the longer the time spent in half-hearted attacks in that depressing rarefied air, the less the chance of ultimate success. Showing me a photograph of the great mountain, Sir Martin said, 'When you get half-way up, keep away to the left; I went too much to my right (*i.e.* west), and got on to the second peak by a very difficult *arête*. The highest point is the easternmost one.' After much more valuable advice, Sir Martin most generously presented me with his Primus stove, reindeer sleeping-bag, Whymper tent, and wind-proof leather coat. 'I have lent them to a chap who is exhibiting all my Spitzbergen things at the Crystal Palace,' said he; 'but here is a note to the authorities there, and you can take away whatever you like.' Here was kindness indeed. I dashed down forthwith to the Crystal Palace, and after ascending the myriad steps and facing the myriad statues that make a visit to that emporium of pleasure such a very laborious proceeding, I explained my errand to one of the staff, and was by him conducted into a pitch-dark room. My guide hailed some invisible personage, and presently a light was switched on, revealing an American gentleman, who had apparently been revelling in the darkness, seated in the midst of a miscellaneous collection of skis, sledges, tents, ice-axes, and sleeping-bags. When this gentleman became aware that I was empowered to deprive him of the bulk of his exhibits he became as arctic in manner as his trophies, and my selection of the things I wanted was punctuated by his derisive comments. 'I reckon that old stove is out-of-date by this time; besides, you could have bought a new one in London for less than half your fare down heah.' 'You'll observe that that sleeping-bag is entirely moth-eaten, and that all the hair's coming out: not a very pleasant place to spend the night in, I cakkilate!' 'The tent you have in your hand is full of holes, and all the guy-ropes are broken short off. The price of such a tent *new* [with fearful emphasis on the new] is 31s. 6d. cash.'

However, I survived the sarcasms of the irate exhibitor of antiquities, and returned rejoicing to London with my booty. Next, following Sir Martin Conway's advice, I paid a visit to Dr. Jaeger's shop in Regent Street, where I bought a stock of his unrivalled woollen clothes; and to the warmth of those fabrics I undoubtedly owe my life.

From the Military Equipment Stores, Waterloo Place, I

bought a Whymper tent, 7 feet long by 4 feet wide, and 3 ft. 6 in. high at the ridge, with canvas floor sewn to the sides to keep out the wind. Then, with my own old favourite 8 feet square Edgington tent, which has been my home in many a wild corner of the world, some chocolate, Brand's essence of beef, a few meat lozenges, an ice-axe, and a gloriously light wolfskin fur coat and cap from Messrs. Revillon, of Queen Victoria Street, E.C., my equipment was complete.

The voyage to Buenos Aires and the journey thence to Mendoza and Puente del Inca is not part of my story. In Mr. Fitzgerald's day the little dexterous railroad that dives into the Cordillera at Mendoza reached only as far as Las Vacas ; but now it has crept ten miles further on, to the famous Puente del Inca, where a natural bridge (*puente*) spans the river formed by the merging of the Cuevas and Horcones torrents with the hot sulphurous waters that have made the Baths of Inca famous throughout South America. To Dr. Cotton's enterprise is due the building of a wooden hotel not a hundred yards from the springs. The latter, as they gush out over the steep varicoloured banks of the river, painting the soil with red and green and ochre bands, are surrounded by quaint little bathing-sheds which cunningly contrived steps, bridges, and ladders bring into intercommunication. Presently an attendant dashes out of an unsuspected cavern with a towel : he mulcts you in the sum of one dollar—about one-and-ninepence—and leaves you to your own devices. Now you are free to bathe in Champagne, or Venus, or Mercury, according to the virulence of your complaint and the strength of your constitution. He must be a strong man wrestling with a fell disease who tackles Champagne with profit—where the water bubbles up white and frothy, and carbonic-acid gas poisons the air. If you elect to sit in those warm delicious waters you must continually wave a towel to exorcise the atmosphere of those demoniac fumes. Hither come drunken *peons* (workmen) and go to sleep comfortably ; and presently the attendant comes to turn them out, but cannot wake them ; nor Dr. Cotton either, nor any other human agency whatsoever. Venus, as elsewhere, was the favourite ; and I am bound to say that in my case she acted according to her wont, and rewarded my tribute with a confounded feeling of slackness.

Few Englishmen who have not travelled beyond Europe can realise the ghastly desolation of the high valleys of the Andes. The ruddy, porphyry, snow-topped mountains rise unredeemed by

one solitary bush or tree ; for two months only in the year a few blades of grass, emerald near the little springs, and patches of bright flowers drape the lower flanks of the mountains and the boulder-strewn valleys. During the rest of the year snow is the only garment that covers the nakedness of those howling wastes.

At the head of one of these broad valleys, belittled by the frowning giants on either side, stands the Inca Hotel, close to the little cluster of shanties which house the workers on the railway. There, on arrival, I found that Dr. Cotton had most kindly made all necessary arrangements for my trip to the big mountain. The weather, as he had wired to me at Buenos Aires, was much the same as that experienced by Sir M. Conway in 1898 ; there was a lot of snow about for the time of year (December 7) ; but that might not prove a drawback. The mules and their *arriero*<sup>1</sup> were hired ; the guide and porters were on the spot, and very nearly sober ; and there was plenty of food to be bought at the store at the back of the hotel.

So my wife and I, or at any rate I—for my wife had a prophetic aversion to the whole idea of the Aconcagua expedition—went rejoicing on our way to dress for dinner, and discovered our quarters in a bare matchboarded room with a flapping canvas ceiling and a door with a couple of wooden latches so curiously contrived that, whereas you could not bolt the door from the inside, the person who left the room and shut the door invariably made you a prisoner. How often have we battered the walls and yelled from the window to be released when Luis or Stefan, the two bristle-headed male housemaids, have left us in durance ! Luis was a queer fellow. One day, some time later, as I lay in bed groaning with pain, I was irritated by his stupidity, and I was not so polite in my requests as he thought I ought to be. Outside the door I soon heard a terrific hubbub : Luis' voice, broken with rage and tears, was to be heard swearing that he would first have my blood and then escape to Chile ; that he was not a dog, and a great deal more to the same effect. To Dr. Cotton's vigorous persuasion I owe my life.

It is as well that intending visitors should know that in South America everybody considers himself every bit as good as everybody else, if not better. You must ask a waiter for the potatoes with the same grave air of deference that you would petition your father for an increased allowance, or expect to have a knife between your ribs before the savoury.

<sup>1</sup> The driver, who is generally the owner.

Early next morning I inspected my men. There were four of them—Anacleto Olavarria, the guide; Ramón Leiva, the *arriero*; and José Villegas and Manuel Gutierrez, the porters. Anacleto went as a porter with Sir Martin Conway's expedition in 1898, and Sir Martin told me to be sure and secure him as a guide if he were alive; but he had heard he was dead. However, Anacleto was not dead, although Dr. Cotton admitted that since Sir Martin's visit Anacleto had consumed enough *aguardiente* to kill a weaker vessel. In Sir Martin Conway's book, *Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego*, page 74, his guide, Maquignaz, reports to Sir Martin: 'Anacleto went like a goat. He was the best of us all. . . . He seems to have had experience in carrying loads over the Cumbre in winter. Besides, he is keen to go up the mountain, and wants to do all he can to help us. If only he had brought warmer clothes with him we might have taken him to the top. There is nothing in the world he would like better.'

Sir Martin continues: 'A minute or two later Anacleto came up, his face radiant with satisfaction; I never saw a man more delighted to be upon mountains. From such human material an excellent guide could easily be made.' On page 82 Sir Martin, speaking of the ascent of the steep scree, writes: 'Here, again, Anacleto suffered less than any of us, partly because of his splendidly hard condition and strength, partly through long practice in scrambling up slopes of débris. I noticed that, although heavily laden, he slipped back less than we did.'

Of the final stages of his descent of Aconcagua Sir Martin says (page 101): 'Anacleto kept the roll of sleeping-bags, upon which he insisted that I should seat myself. He tied one end of his belt to its cord, held the other in his hand, and started running down the soft snow slope, dragging me behind him as on a sledge. The bundle frequently turned over on one side or another and pitched me off. Snow drifted in at my neck and up my sleeves, and every mishap that occurred was occasion to him of renewed delight. Never was man in more frolicsome humour. He laughed, shouted, and sang without cessation. "I know the way up Aconcagua," he said; "I alone of all the people hereabouts; and now I will set up as a guide and take people to the top. I, Anacleto Olavarria, guide to Aconcagua!"'

Lastly, writing of his descent from Portillo to Juncal, on the western slopes of the Andes, Sir Martin says: 'The descent occupied just thirty-five minutes, thanks to Anacleto's bold lead. Such riding down a steep hillside I had never seen. Where he

went I was content to follow in blind reliance upon his knowledge of what mules could do. He rode perfectly straight down the steepest slopes, even of big débris, and that not at a slow walk or with any careful picking of the way, but at a pace that was a sort of tumbling trot. Twice our direct route was intersected by the zigzags at points where the road, being cut out of the hillside, was bordered by an almost vertical excavated wall, fifteen to twenty feet high. Here, at any rate, I looked to see Anacleto turn. But no such thing. He put his mule straight at the drop; and she, gathering up her legs beneath her so that the four hoofs were bunched together, let herself go scraping down the wall till, arrived near the bottom, she gave a little kick and landed squarely in the road.' On page 115 Sir Martin writes: 'It only remained to take farewell of Anacleto, to whom I had become genuinely attached. He is one of the best assistants amongst the many good ones I have encountered in different parts of the world. I presented him with a tent, an ice-axe, rope, climbing-boots, and a few other small articles. He was proudly conscious of possessing a new dignity as guide to Aconcagua.'

Such is an outline of the character, sketched by a good judge, of the Chileno whom two and a half dollars a day, with an extra fifty if he got me to the top of the mountain, enlisted in my service.

Anacleto is a short man, wiry, and inclined to be bandy-legged, with keen, brown eyes, a brown beard, and small, neat features. Directly Dr. Cotton had engaged him for my trip he left his work on the railway and went on a drinking bout, which culminated in two days of speechless intoxication. When we arrived at Inca the *aguardiente* had gone out of him, but a certain blariness about the eyes told its tale. But Anacleto is really no worse than his fellows. The Chilian national cult is drinking, which the authorities are making heroic but ineffectual efforts to repress by locking up anyone who is seen to stagger in his gait.

Ramón, the muleteer, is a stout, ruddy, prosperous-looking fellow; Manuel is a youth with a little moustache and imperial, and a fine taste in colour—a *poncho*<sup>1</sup> gaudily fringed with green and red dangling about him, a blue scarf round his neck, and a flower in his buttonhole.

José is the most blackguardly-looking individual it has ever

<sup>1</sup> The national cloak and blanket with a hole in the middle, through which the head is passed.

been my misfortune to meet. He, too, is short and very strongly built, with a scratchy beard stuck into the sun-blackened skin round his cruel, animal-like mouth. His eyes are bloodshot and foxy, and the whole aspect of the man suggests midnight deeds of blood. Misery does, indeed, acquaint us with strange bedfellows; and only the paralysing cold of Aconcagua could have prevailed with me to lie, as I subsequently did, cheek by jowl with that hideous cut-throat.

On Tuesday, December 9, 1902, Ramón and Manuel started off with the baggage-mules for the base camp, which Dr. Cotton advised me to pitch at 16,000 feet, to which point animals can be got with a struggle. There were three mules to carry the tents, provisions, stove, oil, and sleeping-bags for Anacleto and myself. For the former I had purchased in Buenos Aires a capital bag of *guanaco*<sup>1</sup> skins. The men took a prodigious quantity of meat, bread, and *maté*.<sup>2</sup> I, knowing from Sir Martin Conway the difficulty of digesting heavy foods at high altitudes, took only some tins of Brand's essence of beef, chocolate, meat-lozenges, Van Houten's cocoa, and kola biscuits. The mules, blindfolded with *ponchos* during the operation of loading, were soon ready, and trotted off after their *madrina*<sup>3</sup> down the accustomed path towards the natural bridge. Then Ramón and Manuel swung themselves into their saddles, clapped their enormous spurs to their horses, and galloped headlong into the distance.

Dr. Cotton and I spent the day in riding to the Penitentes, a mountain spired and buttressed like a cathedral, towards which a curving band of isolated rocks, emerging from a bare slope, gives the idea of a procession of cowled monks. After fording a very nasty-looking torrent, running in yeasty haste over huge boulders, and climbing a steep, powdery slope, we got a large view of the mountains towards the west, especially of the quaint *Bodega*,<sup>4</sup> a flat-topped mountain on whose broad back squats a ridiculous little square rock, just like a solitary hut dumped down on a stretching plain. But, alas! Aconcagua was shrouded in mists, and presently the storm swept fiercely down the valley in front of us, and lashed us for a few minutes with its snowy tail. One's

<sup>1</sup> The *guanaco* is an animal allied to the *llama* (pronounced 'yarma') and the *vicuña*. It has been described as having the head of a camel, the body of a sheep, the feet of a deer, the neigh of a horse, and the speed of the devil.

<sup>2</sup> The dried product of *yerba*, which is drunk with boiling water through a *bombilla*, or tube.

<sup>3</sup> 'Godmother,' a mare who leads the mules.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodega* is a store or shop.

first ride on a Chilian pony convinces one that no animal in the world is bolder, surer-footed, or handier. With my own seven-pound saddle on a corky little bay of about 13 hands 3 inches at the end of my first day's ride I felt prepared to follow even the reckless Anacleto himself.

Next morning, December 10, accompanied by Anacleto and José, I set out for Aconcagua. Early I began the lengthy task of dressing, and here I had best enumerate the hundred and one articles of my clothing. Even now I have an affectionate feeling for those amorphous bundles of fabricated wool. I have caught myself gazing sentimentally at my drawers, and I have dropped more than one tear over my waistcoat; when I get home I shall hang up my shirts alongside the ibex heads and the snow-leopard skin. Do I not owe to this devoted bodyguard a life almost miraculously preserved? Alas! that the generations of Trans-andine postmen—hardy traversers of the Cumbre—neither knew nor know the blessed name of Jaeger! Else were there not a tithe of the wooden crosses that to-day mark the spots, remote and solitary, where men foredone with cold lay down to sleep their last sleep. The philosophy of clothes takes on a new importance when the lack of it spells annihilation. I take the greatest possible pride in being the first to inform the world what it must wear in order to have the pleasure of going harmlessly to sleep for twelve hours<sup>1</sup> in the snow with the temperature ten degrees below zero.

First of all came a thin wool and silk vest to mitigate the tickling of Dr. Jaeger's brand-new pair of thickest 'combinations,' the comprehensive garment which followed next, enveloping all but head and feet. Then came two Jaeger shirts—one on top of t'other—beautiful, thick, sky-blue creatures; then a pair of very thick corduroy breeches, tactfully padded, with continuations down to the ankles; then a Jaeger sleeved waistcoat of pure wool; then a thick Jaeger coat, like a blanket, yellow and sheep-like; then the wind-proof leather jerkin given me by Sir Martin Conway, and a vicuña scarf round my neck to top up with. On my feet I first of all put an ordinary pair of merino socks; above them a pair of Shetland wool stockings; next a pair of what are called sleeping stockings, lamb's wool within and goat's hair without, about a quarter of an inch thick and hugely warm; then a still bigger pair of Shetland wool stockings; then a pair of enormous boots; and lastly a pair of putties, three yards long, wound round

<sup>1</sup> The writer slept from 4.30 P.M. to 4 A.M.

the elephantine bulk of my legs. On my head a wolfskin cap covered my ears and neck, and my hands were encased, first, in an ordinary pair of Jaeger woollen gloves, and, secondly, in a large pair of gloves of the kind affected by babies, wherein the mobile thumb grins at the incarcerated fingers. In reserve I had my wolfskin coat, reaching to my knees, yet so light that it in no way interfered with my walking ; and when all these things were donned my form assumed a burly bulkiness that would have rejoiced the heart of a sergeant-major. For the next six days I remained day and night in these garments, and touched neither soap nor water.

It was about nine when Anacleto, José, and I rode off, after having said good-bye to my wife and Dr. and Mrs. Cotton.

I did not like the parting with my wife, for with prophetic insight she had several times spoken despairingly of the Aconcagua trip, and how it would probably end in our having to abandon the chief object of our journey—a ride through Patagonia.

We turned our backs on the little group as we trotted down to the Inca bridge, but once over the stream our course lay westwards, and there in the distance still stood a little solitary figure waving a last farewell. The others had fled into the house for warmth ; but there she still stood watching in the biting wind, till a dip in the valley hid us from her view. For two miles or more the track ran beside the newly completed railway line towards Cuevas, on which the engineers are still at work under my friend Mr. Sheridan. The sandy dunes over which we rode were patched with a light purple vetch, and a short rich grass, called *pastito*,<sup>1</sup> had draped the lowlands in their summer dress.

José had stopped for a moment at the railway men's store to buy a shovel, which he carried, much against his will, as tending to identify him as the Sancho Panza of the party, while Anacleto lit and smoked countless cigarettes of the most atrocious flavour.

About two and a half miles from Inca the Horcones valley diverges to the north from the great east and west valley of the Transandine route, and at its entrance nestles a little lake, well pictured in Mr. Fitzgerald's book, of which the photographs and Mr. Vines' narratives are the best parts. We had shot a duck or two on this lake a few days previously, and launched upon her waters a little collapsible boat—the first, said Dr. Cotton, that ever burst upon that silent sea. We rowed gaily about in her ; but a too curious inspection of a large object at the

<sup>1</sup> Lit. 'little pasture,' the diminutive of *pasto*.

farther end of the lake, which proved to be inflated horse, nearly ended in asphyxia and shipwreck.

Hereabouts the carcasses of horses animals that have succumbed to the strain of the journey from Argentine *estancias*<sup>1</sup> to Chilian *haciendas*,<sup>1</sup> are as numerous as the condors that swoop upwards as the traveller disturbs their meal. From this point Aconcagua, a towering precipice of snow, capped with twin peaks, is magnificently seen, and I carry away from the Andes no mental picture more beautiful than that first sight of the giant, where the condors' great black wings smote against the sunlit snows of the mountain far away and flashed again from the waters at our feet.

The path which we now took up the Horcones valley, almost due north, has been fully described by both Sir Martin Conway and Mr. Fitzgerald ; and by the latter in such a way as to convey the impression that it is particularly dangerous.

Mr. Fitzgerald boggles at the torrent, and is amazed at the precipices. But the pleasing fact remains that he was not drowned—nay, more, he did not even get a ducking ; not only did he not break his neck, but he never even fell down, for there is no mention of such a calamity in his book.

Of course we are told that the Swiss guides of both parties got into cold water ; one would have expected nothing else. A Swiss guide on a horse is an anomaly resented even by inanimate nature. The fact is that if an unskilful rider, crossing a deep strongly running stream, pulls his horse's mouth about, turns his horse's head down stream, and shifts his weight from side to side in the extremity of his terror, there is no horse foaled that can get across safely. Thus poor Zurbriggen nearly met his fate ; but I daresay that he had never thrown his leg across a horse till he got to the Andes. For my own part I forded the same river that Sir Martin and Mr. Fitzgerald and their parties forded, and also another on the way to Penitentes, and yet I hardly got my legs splashed ; and the same holds good of my guides on those six several occasions. As regards the track, I have seen many worse constantly traversed by pack-cayuses<sup>2</sup> in the Rocky Mountains and the Selkirks ; I passed in blissful ignorance over Mr. Fitzgerald's godchild the Paso Malo and knew not my danger. Subsequently I had to walk over it with frostbitten feet, and if it had been as dangerous as he makes out I think I must have made an

<sup>1</sup> The names by which farms are designated in Argentina and Chile respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian name for ponies.

end on't there and then ; for I was suffering tortures of pain, my nerves were gone, and my feet felt as though they belonged to somebody else.

If a man cannot walk along a good sound six-inch path in the mountains without making 'miration over it, as Brer Rabbit would say, when he gets home, well, then he had far better confine his excursions to the pavements of Ludgate Hill. It is wrong needlessly to discourage intending climbers, and here it may be said, once and for all, that there is nothing either in the approaches to or the ascent of Aconcagua that a strong pedestrian in good training cannot tackle successfully, provided always that he have the wit to keep himself warm.

It was a glorious day, bright and clear beyond European conception ; and those delightful Chilian ponies personally conduct you so cleverly that you can drop the reins and star-gaze and ruminate without a qualm. On and on we went up the narrowing valley, looking down upon the roaring flood, with the great horizontally striped bulk of Almacenes<sup>1</sup> on our right and the Torlosa range over us on our left. Presently we emerged into the broad flat valley that runs up to the snout of the western Aconcagua glacier. Here the ground was sparsely strewn with twisted time-worn vegetable fibres—whether the roots or the branches of long since dead bushes I could not determine. Neither bush nor tree grew within fifty miles of this Inferno, and yet here were the bleached bones of what had once been green living things cast up like the battered flotsam of the sea on a desert shore.

Here it was that Anacleto came to the conclusion that it was time to lunch ; so the horses were off saddled and turned out to graze—a somewhat empty privilege—and José miraculously produced from somewhere several three-foot-long ribs of raw flesh, which might have been surreptitiously taken off my pony during the process of off saddling for anything that I knew to the contrary. So we sat down by a little rill of water, and the men lit a fire with snags and proceeded to make an *asado*<sup>2</sup> by frizzling the ribs as they leaned near the blaze on bits of stick. Anacleto soon attacked his rib in the approved style : seizing it at one end with his left hand he cut down a strip of meat with his right, then he caught hold of the greasy flap with his teeth, and tugged and slit until the bone was bare. It was the behaviour of a dog who

<sup>1</sup> Almacenes means a shop. The horizontal strata resemble coloured ponchos folded one above another.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* roast.

had been recently instructed in the use of a knife. Here a little pileated song-sparrow fluttered near us, and a couple of birds uncommonly like jack-snipe flew off a patch of bog hard by.

We had not gone very far after lunch before Anacleto pointed out to me the mules grazing on what seemed to be a naked hill-side. Presently Ramón galloped up and explained to Anacleto (for he had small respect for my Spanish) that as they had been caught in the storm of the previous day they had remained where they were at the spot known to Fitzgerald and Conway as the 14,000-foot camp. This seemed an excellent reason for not going on during the storm ; but it failed to explain why they had not made up for lost time on the day of our arrival. Soon we came on José and Manuel, lounging under a big rock, with the baggage and tents littered round them : they had had twenty-four hours in which to pitch the tents, and yet they had done nothing. This is the correct South American attitude, where the word on every lip is '*Mañana*'.<sup>1</sup> 'To-morrow ! to-morrow ! or if not to-morrow within a month at the outside' is a fair translation of that odious word. Naturally they had their excuse handy. They were waiting to know whether the *patron*<sup>2</sup> would camp there or go on further, knowing full well that, the mules having been turned out two miles away, the lateness of the hour made it impossible for us to go any further that night.

We pitched the Edgington and one of the Whympers, unpacked the bedding, and then set about supper. While it was cooking I made an experimental ascent of a very steep débris slope close to camp, and found it desperately hard work. Soon the wind began to blow with icy coldness, and we were all glad to huddle round a fire whereon a *cazuela*<sup>3</sup> of beef, onions, and potatoes was hissing. I consumed a horrible meal : the onions were hard, the gobbets of meat were tough, and it was very unpleasant having to drink cocoa out of the same cup as José. But at 14,000 feet one is inclined to take things as they come. I soon left the fire for the tent, and went into my bag at six o'clock. I spent a miserable night—racked by terrific pains in my head, and weighed down by that awful feeling of depression which seems to afflict everybody, especially at night, at high altitudes. But next morning I found that the pains in my head vanished with the darkness ; I seemed unaffected by the loss of sleep, and I tackled my breakfast with wondrous success. This day (December 11)

<sup>1</sup> To-morrow.

<sup>2</sup> Master.

<sup>3</sup> A kind of hot-pot, very popular in South America.

we marched from the 14,000-foot camp to the 16,000-foot camp—about four miles over the glacier of Aconcagua on the Horcones side. The whole journey was an object-lesson in the power of horses to negotiate apparently impossible obstacles. The great bent cone of the Cuerno, a mountain very much resembling the Matterhorn, rose in front of us out of a dazzling realm of ice and snow. We had left the warm-coloured rocks behind us and got into an arctic world. Up and down, up and down our horses went, picking their way carefully between the tall, thickly studded cones of snow, called *nieves penitentes*<sup>1</sup> for the same reason that the mountain is called Penitentes—huge pointed lumps, often four feet high, standing in battle array, some bearing transversely on their tops large blocks like the dolmens of Stonehenge.

Sometimes we were ascending hard snow-slopes, so steep that it seemed impossible for a horse to climb them; sometimes rounding a curve into which the horses stuck their hoofs sideways to avoid slipping down into the abyss; sometimes the thin ice on the surface of a hidden stream crackled round their fetlocks; sometimes the clever little beasts bunched their legs together and slithered down an ice-bound bank in almost human fashion.

The wind blew with enormous force, whirling the powdery snow in wisps about the mountain-tops, and Anacleto, questioned about the weather, shook his head dubiously. About 3 P.M. we got to the 16,000-foot camp, after a final struggle up a terrific gradient, which proved too much for one of the mules.

Here levelled tent-sites and empty tins recalled to Anacleto his experiences of the past at the same spot; and he told me that, whereas Sir Martin Conway had had perfect weather at this point, I had come in for a gale. The wind was indeed fearful. We managed with the greatest difficulty to pitch two tents, but every gust seemed certain to carry them away.

That afternoon I had no inclination to remain out of doors and admire that amphitheatre of chaotic snow-pilings soaring up into the dazzling sky. High up on the flank of the Cuerno a stupendous curved wave of snow was frozen as it broke—a rounded marble breaker three hundred yards across, with jagged fringe curling over the sheer immensities of its depth.

Nothing but the foot of Aconcagua was to be seen—we were too near the giant to see his head—but a long, dreary snow-slope

<sup>1</sup> 'Penitents of snow.'

up to some pointed rocks, round which the driven snow was whirling, showed us the morrow's march. I crawled into the sleeping-bag with the Primus stove near me, miserably anticipating the horrors of the night, and made some cocoa; but the wind continually blew out the methylated spirit flame which begins, and the petroleum flame which completes, the action of these lamps, so that the cooking operations were not soon over. Ough! the sickening smell of kerosene for ever present in one's nose! All the time I was on the Aconcagua journey, and for a week afterwards, I could taste nothing and smell nothing but that horrible oil. Then the reindeer bag was an excellent thing, and kept me splendidly warm; but the Crystal Palace gentleman was quite right when he said that for his part he would prefer one that had more recently parted company with a reindeer. The long stiff bristles came out in handfuls, getting into the food as one cooked, and into one's mouth as one slept. And Anacleto was not an ideal bedfellow either.

He smoked the vilest tobacco made on earth, and not unnaturally wanted frequently to expectorate during the process, which he did with great impartiality over my various belongings. If I had called him a filthy brute, even in the best Spanish equivalents, he would not have understood me, for spitting is a most gentlemanly sport in South America. Besides, I wanted to maintain the most cordial relations with the man on whom, I believed, the success or failure of the expedition depended.

Sleep was almost an impossibility that night, so boisterous was the howling of the gale and so continual the banging of the tent canvas. At 1, 3, and 5 A.M. we had all to run out to make good damage done to the guy-ropes; and at last the expected happened, and the ridge-pole of my tent broke with a loud crack.

I did not care; I almost hoped that the wind would blow me back to Inca; for my head felt as though iron bands were shrunken on it without, and as though within a thousand imps of hell were driving sharp knives through and through my brain. I cannot hope to explain the feeling of utter despondency which pervades one during the hours of darkness at these high levels.

Anacleto was not long in deciding that it would be impossible to start that morning (December 12) for the 19,000-foot camp; we could not have kept our feet on the steeper slopes of the mountain. As we watched the powdery clouds driving away towards the west, a gust more terrific than the rest blew over one

of the mule-trunks, which opened in its fall and let loose a green gauze veil which my dear wife had most thoughtfully provided for the better safeguarding of my complexion. I do not exaggerate when I say that in one second that veil was carried a quarter of a mile, and vanished for ever from our ken behind the nearest heights. So, to my bitter disappointment, the day had to be passed in doing nothing. After an early cup of cocoa I managed to sleep till ten, and after a scanty breakfast on Brand's essence of beef and chocolate, Anacleto took me for a little preliminary canter over the base of the Torlosa range. The further I went the better I felt; exercise chased away the ghastly humours of the night, and I found that I could walk without breathing harder than Anacleto, who was quite as grampus-like over stiff gradients as I was.

Eternal silence, killing cold, blinding glare! You are the trinity who rule these remote high hostile corners of the world; and every footprint on these snows looks like a violation, and every spoken word in this silence sounds like a challenge.

I felt, as perhaps many another has felt, a secret joy at finding myself for once at war with Nature. He who has loved her elsewhere, amid the flowers of his garden and under the stars of the summer nights; who has felt something akin to contempt for her on the long smug plains by the rivers; here must exult; as her icy sword strives to stop his heart, in the delight of battling with the ficklest creature of the universe. There was only one thing in that terrible valley, animal or vegetable, which still eluded death. On the small dusty patch on which our camp was pitched a few lone discs of stonecrop were starving. When I see you again, my little friends, clinging happily to the roof of an English cottage, I shall take off my hat to you, for now I know that you are the bravest arctic explorers in the whole brave kingdom of the plants.

REGINALD RANKIN.

(*To be continued.*)

*Ballade of Bird's-nesting.*

*To G. N.*

To you on sunny morns of May,  
 To you, with zeal and skill combined,  
 Are given, where'er our footsteps stray,  
 Discoveries of the choicer kind ;  
 While I, in knowledge far behind,  
 As I confess with conscious blushes,  
 To modest exploits am resigned—  
 Blackbirds and chaffinches and thrushes.

For you the pipit in the brae,  
 To cheat all eyes but yours designed ;  
 The long-tailed tit upon the spray,  
 The creeper in the pollard's rind ;  
 The water ouzel, moss-entwined,  
 Where down the rocks the streamlet gushes :  
 For me, as through the woods we wind,  
 Blackbirds and chaffinches and thrushes.

Yet spots I light on by the way  
 Well suited to the nesting mind,  
 Whose fitness might be, one would say,  
 By some observant bird divined ;

Secluded hollows, bracken-lined,  
Inviting alcoves in the rushes;  
But in the end I only find  
Blackbirds and chaffinches and thrushes.

ENVOY.

The gifts of Fate are well defined,  
To those that have, the luck that crushes,  
To others, inexpert and blind,  
Blackbirds and chaffinches and thrushes.

A. C.

## *Recollections of a Tenderfoot.*

### III.

TAKING up the thread of my recollections at the point where it was dropped nearly two years ago, I may remind my readers that the close of my first year in the West found me and my associate, Ryan, having just completed a large fence contract, out of which we escaped whole only by the very narrowest of margins. We had had all the contracting we wanted—for the time, at all events. Still, we had no wish to separate, and looked around for something to give us employment through the winter which was now on us. During the several months we had been together, at the B. ranche and in camp, there had never been, so far as I can remember, even a shadow of disagreement between us—a fact sufficiently remarkable when the roughness of the life we were leading is taken into consideration, and its innumerable vexations.

However, this was too good to last. ‘*Cherchez la femme*,’ says the cynical French proverb. The ‘eternal feminine’ came between us in no other shape, I grieve to say, than Ryan’s wife. Let me hasten to explain a statement which, on the face of it, certainly seems to need explanation. It is entirely true that a good deal of emotion passed between the lady and myself, and, at times, of a very violent kind; but the feeling that inspired it was not attraction but its opposite. I suppose we had as little use for each other, as Americans say, as any two people ever had on earth. Very much better so, assuredly, than if the sentiment had been reversed, but the fact made it equally impossible for us to live together harmoniously, and ultimately brought our partnership to an end.

She appeared on the scene in this wise. To give us something to do and make expenses, if possible, through the winter, we decided to buy some hay, hundreds of tons of which were put

up on the ranches along the river bottom, and some steers to feed it to. The hay was cheap, there being only one market for the surplus within a reasonable distance, and that not a very large one. I think it could be got for four dollars a ton: it was not of a quality to fatten stock readily, but everything on the range was fat in those days at that time of the year, and the idea was to get the steers soon before the hard weather had caused them to 'shrink,' and keep them holding their own while the range cattle would be falling off, and sell in the spring when anything fat would be scarce and bring a good price. Such steers as we wanted were worth, when we bought, from thirty-five to forty dollars. The hay cost, I think, four dollars a ton. Two tons a head would be all and more than all they would get away with. If they held their own, they should be worth in the spring from fifty to fifty-five and even sixty dollars.

It was no trouble to buy the hay; nearly every ranchman on the river had a surplus to dispose of, and, as ranching was in those days much as it is now—the necessities of life in reasonable abundance, but very little ready money—the three or four hundred dollars we were prepared to lay out were a good deal of an object, and we could afford to be a little particular. We bought finally at a ranche not far from our old quarters—the B. ranche—but on the other side of the river. We also were given the privilege of feeding it out on the ranche in a very warm, sheltered place, round which the river ran in a loop, so that there was abundance of water. The ranchman also rented us his house, reserving two rooms for himself to 'bach' in.

'Now,' said Ryan exultingly, 'now we know where we are going to be, I'll send for the folks' (*i.e.* his wife and two children), 'and we'll get out of this thing of "baching."'  
Mrs. Ryan, I should say, had already been in this part of the country, and had, for a while, kept house on the B. ranche during its prosperous days. Shortly before I came on the scene she had gone on a protracted visit to her own people in another State.

The idea sounded pleasant after some months of camp life, and I gave a joyful assent. I even suggested to Joe, the man who had sold us the hay, that he should make arrangements to board with us and, like us, avoid 'this thing of baching.' 'Much obliged,' he said. 'I lived in a cyclone country once and came west to get out of it.' More he would not say, but the remark was disquieting, and I awaited the lady's coming with forebodings.

These forebodings, I may as well say here as anywhere, were abundantly justified when she did arrive. All the scolds, shrews, termagants and viragoes I have read of in history or fiction fade into insignificance, in my mind, by the side of this redoubtable woman. In fact most of them seem to have had their faults on the surface; with a violent temper still to have been good-hearted. Mrs. McStinger is shown as behaving very prettily on occasion. Xanthippe is said to have nursed her husband tenderly. One can imagine Helen McGregor displaying an urbane dignity that might have sent any chance Southron away enraptured. Not so in the case of Mrs. Ryan. With her, ill-temper was chronic, varying only from ungraciousness to wild fury. She may have had good qualities, but if so she concealed them so carefully that I never found them out. A big Missourian, who was working for us later on, put the case in a nutshell to her once. She had turned loose on him one evening at supper time—it seems to me it was on a point of table etiquette, the Missourian conveying his pie to his mouth with his fingers, and Mrs. Ryan indignantly demanding what he thought his knife was for. He sat, head down, enduring the torrent of words and saying nothing. By-and-by he looked up at her and said, in his slow Missouri drawl, 'I suppose you're a pretty good woman of your sort, but damn the sort!' I echoed the sentiment.

She was on us, however, temper, children, and all. Once settled, Ryan and I set about to buy our steers. We rode around to the neighbouring ranches and engaged them, and returned a few days after to drive them home. Our adventures on these two trips would make an article of themselves—not that there is anything remarkable as a rule in bargaining for a bunch of cattle and then going to fetch them, but it did so happen that on these two trips we had more misadventures and troubles than a dozen such ordinarily furnish. Space, however, forbids me to set them down, but one joke, albeit on myself, must be told.

We happened to stay all night on the first trip at a ranche where there were several young fellows, some sons of the house, others stray cowboys, stopping like ourselves over night. In the presence of this crowd I could notice a slight manifestation of the Western attitude towards Englishmen, probably not so marked as it would have been had Ryan not been with me, but just enough to make one feel oneself under criticism, and anxious to say or do nothing which would give the enemy a chance to blaspheme. Among the number was a young fellow of seventeen or eighteen

whom Ryan and I had known when we were engaged on the fence contract as a hand employed by a stockman named Vroman. The only name I had ever heard him called by was 'Kid.' As much for the sake of saying something as for any other reason, I addressed myself to him. What I meant to say was 'Has Vroman got any steers to sell, Kid?' By some perverse accident the words came out, 'Has Vroman got any kids to sell, Steer?' One can imagine the howl of delight with which this 'break' was welcomed. It was ridiculous enough in all conscience, but they made the utmost of it. All through the evening, long after it might have been allowed to drop, one or other of them would burst out. I was not sorry to leave the ranche next morning.

A curious result of our buying these steers was in one instance the breaking up of a family. We bought ten—by far the best, by the way, that we got at all—from a gruff old-timer of a ranchman, paying him forty-five dollars apiece, or ten dollars a head more than we had given elsewhere. His cattle were a year older and worth it. As soon as we had started with them he set out for town with his waggon and team—an all day's drive—intending to cash our cheque and bring back the winter supplies for the family. Several days passed, as we heard afterwards, and still no word from him. At last his wife persuaded a neighbour to go to town and hunt him up if possible. He found the old man in a gambling 'dive,' his money all gone and one horse of his team played off. The neighbour got him out somehow and brought him home. When he arrived, moneyless, grubless, and with only one horse, his wife was so indignant that, *more Americano*, she 'quit him cold.' The ranche was in her name, and she sold it to the first buyer she could find at his own price, took her little boy, and left for parts unknown.

The steers safe in their new quarters, we subsided into a routine the monotony of which was only varied by the vagaries of Mrs. Ryan's temper. She gave us plenty of excitement, particularly on washing days, when we stepped around gingerly, addressed each other with bated breath, and kept out of the way as much as we could. I had a big advantage over Ryan, who himself was a good deal in requisition on these occasions, as I could sneak off to a haven of refuge with Joe, the owner of the premises, from whose bachelor precincts we could hear the fray and, smoking the calumet of peace, congratulate each other we were out of it. One good thing about washing day was that on that day fate usually overtook Jemmy, the Ryan boy—a perverse imp who needed

chastising every day of his life, and on washing days at least got a part of what he deserved.

But we had not had the steers very long before a more profitable scheme suggested itself. At the time of which I write, cattle were at their highest on Western ranges. A large cattle company had paid a fabulous dividend, and all manner of people who could spare a little money from their own business crowded to invest it in a few cattle. The idea was, I suppose, that the cattle would make their own living the year round, and grow into a large herd with hardly any expense. As a consequence, stock cattle were 'out of sight,' and our State did not begin to supply the demand. But in the Eastern part of Kansas, where there was no free range, prices had not become inflated, and yearling heifers, which everybody was inquiring after, could be bought at the old figures—say, from five to seven or eight dollars. On the Western ranges, seventeen or eighteen was being paid. Transportation amounted to about two dollars a head. Here seemed to be a chance for some quick money. We talked it over and decided to risk three car-loads, or about a hundred and twenty or thirty head of yearling heifers. Ryan was to go to Kansas and do the buying, and I was to stay at home and take care of the steers. The funds were furnished by me, not, as I remember, without a good deal of misgiving as to whether I ought to let what was to me a very considerable sum pass out of my control entirely. But to go along myself was to more than double the expense, as in addition to double fares and hotel bills some one would have to be hired to tend the stock at home. Besides, I had had repeated proofs of Ryan's integrity. Again, he was leaving hostages for his safe return with me in the shape of his nearest and, presumably, dearest. But somehow I did not take much comfort in reflecting on this. Like Falstaff's tailor, 'I liked not the security.' In fact, it was the possibility of escape for Ryan that first gave me pause. But I need have had no fears. In the transactions that followed Ryan showed himself, as heretofore, as honest as he was capable, and handled our modest capital with great skill.

He then took the train for Kansas to buy the heifers, and I remained in charge of the steers and the widow and orphan, feeling as I imagined a man might who had the care of an imperfectly tamed tigress thrust upon him. We got along somehow—perhaps the less said the better—and in about three weeks' time Ryan was back with the newly purchased stock. We unloaded

them, drove them to water and then a couple of miles on to the prairie to graze, and in two hours' time had sold the entire bunch to a neighbouring stockman, clearing, as I well remember, 437 dollars on the deal. This was far ahead of anything that the steers could possibly do for us, and put us out of conceit with them. There were but thirty-five of them (we had hoped to get fifty, but had not been able), and if we cleared ten dollars a head after all the bother of them all the winter we should be doing well. So it was decided to sell them at the first opportunity, provided we could get out whole.

Ryan took a 'lay-off' of a couple of days, and started back again, having first thoughtfully bribed his better half with a piece of 'dress goods' to keep the peace, and making an impassioned appeal to me to do the same. 'I know it's tough,' I can remember him saying, 'but think how well we're doing, and don't let a woman's tongue spoil it.'

In a few days, as it happened, a beef-buyer came along, and I had to tackle him single-handed. He was good enough to compliment me on the steers, which my later knowledge gives me to know were certainly nice. I am afraid he got a little the best of me on the deal, and I have often smiled to think what a 'snap' Mr. Wakeman ran on to in finding as nice a bunch as they were in charge of no more formidable antagonist than a tenderfoot Englishman. However, we did not lose anything on them, but, on the contrary, made a trifle and got the money loose, so that we could employ it to better advantage.

Ryan was back in about the same time as before with nine heifers, which we disposed of to the same man, clearing, as I again well remember, five hundred dollars exactly—and, doing so, touched high-water mark. We never made quite so much again on the same number of head, as prices went up in Kansas and we had not the same luck in finding an immediate purchaser, who would take them off our hands right at home without delivery or other expenses. Now the steers were disposed of I was footloose, and on the third trip we went together, both in high spirits, and both, I imagine, feeling like boys let loose from school. I can vouch for myself at all events.

Arriving in the little country town in Kansas, which he had made his headquarters, I was amused and surprised to see the impression Ryan had made, and the deference with which he was treated as a Western cattleman. Some share of this was extended to me, and a paragraph in an issue of the local paper which came

out a day or so after our arrival, presented me in a new light to myself. It stated that 'our "berg" had received another call from Mr. Ryan, who was in search of more cattle to stock his extensive ranches. He was accompanied this time by his partner, an Englishman of great wealth,' and more in the same strain. I found further that I controlled unlimited capital, and had a large *clientèle* in England waiting to invest in Western securities on my advice. I suppose this was manufactured 'out of whole cloth' as they say, by the editor, but noticing a conscious look on Ryan's face as I showed it to him, I taxed him with it, and he owned up with much laughter to having 'stuffed the editor up,' much as Mickey Free of yore once allowed his imagination to run riot detailing the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo to the editor of the *Portrush Times*.

Most people in the West, however, know enough to accept the statements of their local papers with a liberal discount, and the sight of the controller of millions picking up stock cattle by ones and twos excited no remark that reached him at all events. Perhaps his finally leaving the town, not in a private palace car such as they tell me millionaires travel in, nor even in the Pullman, which, as I suppose is generally known, is a kind of glorified first class, but 'prod pole' in hand on the roof of a cattle car, may have furnished material for another paragraph on the eccentricity of millionaires.

Millionaire! Save the mark! A man need not be very high up the financial ladder to be willing to hand over the job I was now engaged on to some less fortunate person. I found the taking these car-loads of weak cattle (for pitifully weak they all were, having endured the greater part of a Kansas winter without shelter and not on the most nourishing food) on a personally conducted tour of some hundreds of miles over the rough tracks of those days the most responsible and arduous job I had yet undertaken. It is one thing to 'ship' beef cattle, which in the nature of things are strong and hearty, and able to stand the fatigue of the journey, and another altogether to be in charge of a lot of weak ones. With beef the stockmen can travel in the 'caboose,' or guard's van, which has comfortable seats and a stove, and take their ease, getting out only when they are assured of a good long stop, and leisurely inspecting their cattle and having their minds free from anxiety. But the man in charge of weak cattle should, if he does his duty, be out at every stop looking them over, and if, or rather when, he finds one down he must use all diligence to get it on its feet again or it will soon be trampled to death. If all his

efforts are unavailing he must have the train stopped at the first place where there are facilities for unloading. It happens constantly that the train will start before he has finished his inspection, and he must swing on, climb up, and make his way back to the caboose over the roofs, emulating the train hands but without their professional skill.

The railway hands acquire as great skill in balancing themselves as do sailors and stewards on vessels, and run along the tops of the cars with the train going at full speed, rocking and swaying, as heavily laden freights on Western tracks do, without turning a hair. When one considers the danger from the high winds of the plains, and the sharp curves and steep grades of the mountain roads, and perils from snow and ice, it is no wonder that insurance companies do not consider a brakeman a good risk. As a matter of fact, I believe the mortality among them is shocking, though not so high as it used to be.

This was my first trip, and I had everything to learn at once. When we started, the three cars of stock were near the caboose—a great advantage—the cattle as yet not tired, and, for a while, all went swimmingly. Presently, however, the composition of the train was altered; some cars were switched off, others added, and my three cars were away up close behind the engine, fully a quarter of a mile, I should say, from the caboose, which is always, by the regulations, at the end of the train. This meant that, at every stop, short or long, I had to get out and run this distance at the best gait I could muster, to get there before the train started. Then, after doing what was necessary for the cattle, I had almost invariably to make my way back to the caboose on top almost the entire length of the train. This however I soon got used to, and, in fact, rather enjoyed, as long as the wind was not blowing. As Mr. Squeers said, *à propos* of thrashing a boy in a hackney coach, ‘there was inconveniency in it, but the novelty gave it a relish.’ One night, however, in the small hours, when the train was running ‘full bat,’ and a high wind blowing, I found my retreat to the caboose cut off. At the last stop there had been a good deal of switching (*Anglicè* shunting), but I had been busy, and paid no attention to what was doing. I now found, instead of the unbroken line of boxcars, with their footboard on top, that I had been journeying over a sudden solution of continuity. Three flat cars—the first supporting a huge boiler, and the other two laden with machinery, or bridge iron, or something of the kind, had to be crossed before I could reach the haven of the caboose.

and that stove which I had been anticipating. I climbed down on to the boiler car, and, holding on when I could by the chains with which it was fastened, stepped along the edge till, to my disgust, I came to a place where the dome stuck out over the edge. It was too big to step round, there was no chain handy to climb up the side by, and, in the circumstances, one could not afford to slip, and there seemed nothing else for it but to go back, which, in fact, I did, and sat shivering on top of a boxcar, chilled to the bone, waiting for a stop, and wondering into what extraordinary situation fate would lead me next.

We kept up the cattle-shipping for several weeks without intermission. We got an order, on a smaller margin than heretofore, but still on a good paying basis, for several car-loads. Ryan did the buying, and it remained my task to bring them through in lots of three and four cars at a time. It was a hard, rough, look-out-for-yourself business, and a very anxious one. It was also very exhausting, as meals were, for the most part, 'lunches,' as the phrase is, snatched anywhere and anyhow, and a night in bed, when travelling with the cattle, a luxury unknown. Stock travelling by rail have, by law, very properly, to be unloaded and fed and watered once in so many hours, and this stop gave their weary attendant a chance to catch up a little. As winter resolved into spring, the stock grew weaker and weaker—early spring is always the most trying time for cattle that have not had shelter—and we had some loss every trip. Still, there was very good money in it, and I was sorry when the slackening of business compelled us to make another change.

For slacken it did unmistakably after our large order was filled. We had to pay more for cattle as spring came on, and had advanced our own price a little, and the last shipment had not been disposed of, but remained on our hands. We also had several head which we had accumulated from other shipments, as we had made a practice of keeping out anything we particularly fancied for ourselves. We had to have some place for headquarters if we should decide to brand all these and turn them on the range. Further, a fresh disposition had to be made of Ryan's family—our time there was up, and our friend Joe, whose own wife was returning with the swallows, needed his house. For all these reasons we determined to rent a ranche we had taken a liking to in a different locality, and moved in bag and baggage.

This change, the closing phase of these recollections, was fraught with disaster. It was, strategically, an error. It would

have been better for both of us if, now our speculation had come, as it seemed, to its natural end, we had divided the plunder and separated. We both ought to have known, probably did know, that for any outsider to make one of that household was an absolute impossibility. And yet, as I remember, the *per contra* had a good deal to be said for it. We had made, on a small scale, a good deal of money—or, rather, Ryan had for both of us; by myself I could no more have done it than have swum the Atlantic—and we hoped and intended to keep on at the same thing, if not in the haste and rush we had been in for the past several weeks, still from time to time as occasion offered. Cattle dealing was still to be the main issue, and the ranche only subsidiary. In Ryan I had the sense to recognise I had found a valuable man—in more than twenty years in the West I have not encountered the exact combination of qualities which marked him out from his fellows. He was the guide of my uncertain footsteps in the utterly new life I was leading, and the reliance and dependence I placed on him had gained additional justification from each new venture we went into. Again, by staying together we should keep the funds together, and not only the money, but the horses and other stock we had accumulated, besides the waggons, harness, saddles, and other expensive items of a ranching outfit. If I could but tough it through for a year or two, I told myself, I should at least be better able to stand alone, and should have a broader base to stand on.

But it was attempting the impossible. The conditions were entirely altered. During the cattle-shipping the work, though hard while it lasted, had not been unremitting. There had been considerable excitement about it and a good big reward in plain sight. It kept one's courage up. Now, going on to the ranche, we were face to face with the steady grind and inevitable monotony which belong to the life, and which neither of us, I think, fresh from the stir and bustle of our late employment, was in any humour to endure. In the cattle-shipping, too, each had had his own duties and kept out of the other's way. Now we were together too much, and a hundred opportunities for friction arose both in the house and out of it.

Again, whereas I had recently been playing a tolerably important part, it making all the difference my being there to take charge of the cattle on the road, deliver them, and settle up with the purchaser, now on the ranche I was no longer able to 'keep up my end.' My summer on the B. ranche, detailed a year or

two ago in the pages of this magazine, had taught me nothing about ranche processes, such as haying and harvesting, irrigating, ploughing, and the like. Here I was again the veriest tenderfoot, starting again from the beginning, making every blunder that ever tenderfoot did make, with a few original ones thrown in, and having, like a child, perpetually to be helped and rescued. It is a time that I hate to recall as one of constant humiliation and much unseemly quarrelling. Diving and delving into my recollections, it seems as if in each fresh occupation I engaged in I made some dismal blunder, nearly always entailing some mishap greater or smaller—each mishap furnishing a fresh text for Mrs. Ryan from which to urge my inefficiency on her husband, and each sermon from her gradually weakening the cord of his allegiance.

There would have been some hope of success if I had been the one to make the trips in search of cattle and Ryan the one to stay at home and 'hold down' the ranche, and incidentally the housekeeper. But the difficulty was that he was needed in both places. In the cattle-buying he was absolutely indispensable. All business men know the value of a good buyer, and how much scarcer they are than good salesmen. As a cattle buyer he was hard to beat. He had to my knowledge more than one offer of employment in that line from people who watched him while our business was in full swing, and who were ready to go into the business on a much larger scale than we could. But he had remained loyal. To substitute myself for him when he was at his best would have been absurd. He then would start on a cattle-buying trip, and I was left at home nominally to run the ranche, but with this formidable woman a sour, hostile, and by no means always silent, self-appointed supervisor of my proceedings, which at this stage of the game themselves must often have been enough to make angels weep. The situation certainly has its highly ludicrous side, even through a long vista of years; but I can vouch for it that at the time neither participant was the least in a state of mind to appreciate the humour, but was in deadly earnest.

It did not take me long to find out that, if we were to stay together at all, I must get out of the house and out of immediate reach of that tongue. A 'baching' cabin was built for me, and for a while things were a little better. But only for a while. The feud between Mrs. Ryan and myself had by this time crystallised into a fine old-fashioned hatred, and she had evidently

made up her mind to give her husband no peace until she had separated us.

At one time, indeed, it seemed as if a solution of this *vezata quæstio* was at hand, from natural causes I was going to say, but the expression is hardly correct, as will appear directly. Ryan came over to my shanty one night about midnight to ask me to go for the doctor. His wife was having what he described as "smothering spells." When they came on she could not get her breath, he said, and matters seemed pretty bad. There was a doctor of a sort, as our Missourian would have said, and yet not of such a bad sort either, at the little town two miles distant, which was the headquarters of the settlement. I went of course, routed him out and brought him to the ranche, and at Ryan's invitation followed him in. He and his wife were both up and dressed, and Mrs. Ryan certainly did seem to be in a bad way. When the 'spells' came on she gasped for breath, grew purple in the face, could neither sit, stand, nor lie, and only found relief by walking round the room leaning far back in her husband's arms, beating the air with her own. I supposed it some heart affection. The doctor produced some medicine, of which the dose was two drops in a teaspoonful of water. Whatever it was it was potent and brought relief at once. She had several 'spells' in about an hour or an hour and a half, and each time the dose had an almost instantaneous effect. The intervals grew longer and the doctor rose to go, leaving the medicine. 'You see how to use it,' he said; 'two drops, remember.' He had not been gone long when another 'spell' came on, a bad one, and Ryan seized the bottle. 'Here,' he said, pouring out what looked like a teaspoonful into a cup and mixing it with water—'here,' calling his wife by name, 'drink this. I don't take no stock in no two drops of nothing!' She clutched it and swallowed it down. I believe, but am not sure, that I made some kind of a half inarticulate protest, but if I did, neither of them took any notice. The whole thing was done in an instant. To my amazement, beyond a slight choke, she seemed none the worse—on the contrary all the better. Telling the story to a neighbour next day, and saying I had looked for her to drop—'Lor' sakes,' he said, 'you couldn't kill her, she's too ornary. Wonder what you was a-wishin' if a fellow could get at the back of your mind,' he added with a grin. It was a question which I had asked myself and had not been able to answer to my satisfaction. I hope no curious person will inquire too closely.

I had intended to set down a few of the most poignant episodes

of this phase of my ranching career, but space forbids it. Perhaps there may be room for a solitary sample of the kind of thing that kept us in a constant state of semi-subdued exasperation.

For some purpose we needed some boards, and it fell to me to go to the saw-mill after them. Arrived there I made my wants known, was waited on, and left to my own devices. There is not much time for anything but scant attention at a saw-mill. I got the load on, and the next thing was to bind it. For this purpose I had brought a chain in orthodox fashion, but had not thought to ask Ryan how to get it tight. It is just in these little matters that the tenderfoot breaks down. There is a little knack in binding with a chain—one showing is enough for anybody, but most people require to be shown once. In everything I was doing it was nearly always 'the first time.' The light of nature did not show me how in this case, and I may remark that it seldom did. I fastened it in a bungling, slipshod, thoroughly tenderfoot way, and started down the steep hill that led from the mill. Almost at once the load slipped forward and began to job the horses, and it was only by turning them up the mountain side that I escaped a regular mix up. Getting them stopped, I had my load to arrange all over again and had to bind it again. This time I got something that would just stay by going at a snail's pace, and I got down the hill in safety. My way back led past a store, where I had been directed to get some things for the house. I remember well what they were, for good reason—some mustard, rice, and navy beans. I got them and started home. A cold rain came on and froze as it fell. I started to trot a little down a slight hill and almost instantly my load all went to pieces, some boards slipping off in front and others behind. To make a long story short, it was long after dark when I got home, whereas with ordinary luck a man should have made the trip by two o'clock. Cold and wet to the skin, how many times I had to rearrange those boards it is impossible to say—only a dogged desperation prevented me from throwing them off. They were most of them painted yellow from the mustard which was all ready for use, and the beans and rice were dribbling from their papers. I was leaving a trail like the princess in the fairy tale, and could not even pretend I had forgotten the errands. When I did get home I found Ryan saddling up to see 'what had happened now.' Nothing was said in the house to me personally, but imagine the humiliation of it all; for this, as I said, is but a sample of what went on nearly every day.

Enough has been said to show that our connection was doomed. *Gutta cavat lapidem.* A few months more and we parted company, and later I found myself on a ranche of my own, free to work my own sweet will, no longer strictly a tenderfoot, but assuredly still a long way from having my lesson learnt perfectly. Some day, if permitted, I may relate a few of my further experiences on this place which are not without significance.

J. R. E. SUMNER.

## *A French Fleet in Possession of the Channel.*

THE fear of a French invasion, like a clinging fog, enveloped the seaboard population of England in the days of our great-grandmothers, and from the coasts penetrated far inland. Bonaparte's flat-bottomed boats, which choked every harbour and creek from Dunkirk to Brest, waiting for that twelve hours' command of the sea which has never yet been vouchsafed to the French flag, were stern realities, and not merely the terror-stricken fancies of persons in their first or second childhood. What vaulting ambition failed to accomplish at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the aromatic onion has been able to perform in the twentieth. English farmers and the "landed interest" bemoan the degenerate days upon which agriculture has fallen, and often content themselves with gloomy lamentations over the low prices of grain and roots, without making any very intelligent or persistent attempt to devise improved methods of cultivation or to find new customers, leaving it to Belgian and French poultry breeders and market gardeners to send their commodities into our markets, and by underselling to extinguish native hopes, profits, and industries. Every port from the North Foreland to the Land's End is made a dépôt from which blue-bloused men and boys, in the calm or in the storm, under the sunshine or through the rain, draw like beasts of burden their daily load for twenty miles round. The command of English possessed by these peasants is limited to the ability to inform housewives that 'Onions very sheep to-day—half-price, two shillings,' for a couple of strings which will be parted with for one shilling or even less; but in spite of their linguistic deficiencies the foreigners sell the onions and oust the British grower. Pertinacity, enterprise, and frugality drive insular lethargy, stolidity, and wastefulness off the field.

The past winter brought us pathetic and painful details of the sufferings of fisherfolk along the coast of Brittany, through the failure of the sardines to appear in their accustomed haunts.

Men, women, and children displayed an astonishing supineness in their suffering, contenting themselves with simply sitting still to die of starvation. But idle apathy is not often found in French seamen, and within the last year or two a whole fleet has set sail from the shores of France, and invaded the waters on the west of England, in search of that bread, and perhaps butter, which its own territory fails to supply. All maritime nations jealously guard the right of fishing within the internationally-agreed limit of three miles from the land; but beyond that imaginary line the sea is free to all, and however local fishermen may look with angry eyes upon the intrusion of 'foreigners' of their own or of another race, they cannot legally molest those who have literally obeyed the command to launch out into the deep, and they do not molest them, unless in overwhelming numbers or under cover of darkness.

There are many excellent fishing-grounds outside the three-mile limit yet contiguous to our shores, where the intrusion of the French cannot be prevented. For instance, there are the Seven Stones to the west-north-west of the Land's End, swarming with lobsters and other shellfish, which are not reserved for Britons or Bretons, from the fact that the rocks are only awash at half tides, and cannot be made an appanage of either the Union Jack or the Tricolour. This teeming ground has been left unfished except for visits at rare intervals from the Isles of Scilly, the spot being too rough for ordinary punts, and the distance too great for any but daring seamen. Yet French craft are now sailed to these far-off and troubled waters, and French fishermen hold the entrance to the Channel to the north and the west, keeping the sea all through the summer and late into the autumn for a fortnight in every month.

To-day the east wind is roaring down the English Channel in a style which even Charles Kingsley might be contented with. The sea sweeps before the rising gale, flinging the foam aloft from the boiling waves as they break, making it bad weather for big ships and a positive danger to all small craft. Through this storm white-sailed cutters from ten to twenty tons apiece scud along with their lee scuppers under, and one after another drop anchor in Whitesand Bay, between Cape Cornwall and the Land's End, until that water, ordinarily free from alien keels, is in possession of a French fleet of fifty sail. The more daring and perhaps the more timid beat up past the Longships Lighthouse, past Porthcurno, the landing-place of the Eastern Telegraph Company,

past the Runnel Stone and Mousehole, to find shelter and quietness in Mount's Bay.

'Them's them ould French crabbers,' explained a fisherman, jerking his thumb in the direction of the newcomers. 'No wonder no crawfishes doan't come to our crab-pots, when them outlandish customers do catch 'em all in deep water. It stands to reason a fish caan't come to land ef he's catched out to say.' We acknowledged that this theory was highly probable, and suggested that the only remedy was to go, as they were doing, to where the crayfishes were thickest, and from which, presumably, they set out to visit the shore. 'Look at our booats, and look at them cutters!' he continued, in an injured tone. 'How can we compeety 'gainst they? Our big punts are twenty feet long, open to the weather, and forced to hug the shore, while their cutters are none of them less than half a score of tons, are all decked, and can venture into the ocean itself. It isn't easy to swop wan rig, wan model, and wan size for another as defferent as a shark from a mackerel. Besides, where's the money to come from? The fact is, gentlemen, them Frenchmen have got the start of we, and can live at our expense!'

'Let us go on board one of the cutters and see for ourselves what they are like,' we proposed. 'Ef you are inclined to risk it, I'm your man,' said he. 'But they'm crabbet customers, being furriners, and doan't like a passel av strangers poking their nawses into what doan't consarn 'em. But, ef you will go, let us taake 'em a little present to oppen their hearts and their gangway.' 'What will be most acceptable?' 'Well, ef I naamed the moast acceptable thing, I spects it 'ud be a drap of grog; but gents, I'm a Ragabite, and caan't encourage the consoomin' of liquor. S'poase you buy haaf a dozen cabbages out of this 'ere vegetable cart, and I'll run in and fetch a pail of snails that the boys 'ave just picked for the ducks. Ef cabbages and snails biled together waan't warm up their hearts they must be very rummy Frenchmen.'

Ten minutes later we reached the side of the nearest cutter, holding up a cabbage apiece as our passport and certificate of good intentions. 'Non, non,' said a bearded seaman, who proved to be the skipper, waving us away with both hands, 'no buy; we not much money.' An intimation that the cabbages were a gratuitous offering, and the display of the pail with its inner sides garnished everywhere with crawling snails, produced a revulsion of feeling in the Gallic breast and the parts adjacent thereto, and we were almost hauled over the bulwarks.

The crew consisted of three men and a boy, or only one in excess of the crew found in most of the western fishing-boats when in quest of crabs and lobsters. The accommodation, like that of both eastern and western mackerel, pilchard, and herring drift boats, was of a very rough description—comfort anywhere in bad weather, and below even in fine weather, being out of the question. The berths, which almost filled the narrow limits of the cabin, afforded, with their coarse blankets and spare garments, sufficient warmth and shelter, but the atmosphere which pervaded both cabin and bunks was, as Leech once observed of an odour, 'almost thick enough to be sketched.' Fortunately the Atlantic breezes on deck compensated for a lack of oxygen below, and men and boy were sturdy, bronzed sailors, able to bear much fatigue and hardship without injury, and full of energy and intelligence.

'Have you seen that thing amidships?' whispered our fisherman friend, coming aft to us as we were airing our best French for the information and perhaps amusement of the captain. 'No, what is it?' 'A will, sir, as I'm alive. They have sinked a will right out through the bottom of the cutter, and big crawfishes are marching up and down at the bottom by scores, jest like a regiment of marines.' This well for the storing alive of the captives until they could be landed at a French port about once in a fortnight, was one of the characteristic features of the foreign venture. English fishermen have their store-pots, in which they keep their crabs, lobsters, and crayfishes within easy reach of the shore until they can be fetched by smacks or sent to the market by rail; but the French fishermen boldly combine the collecting smacks with the fishing-boats, turn the holds of their vessels into store tanks through which the wholesome sea water finds ingress and egress, and keep their spoils until the spring tides make it impossible to pursue their occupations, thus affording them leisure to take their wares to market.

A strong easterly wind blew for four days, affording us ample time to become acquainted with each other, and, before it had died away, giving place to a gentle northerly breeze, French and English were firm friends. The skipper's proposal, therefore, that we should take a cruise in his cutter, with the prospect of being landed at Scilly or at Penzance should the weather again become unfit for fishing, though startling, was not unwelcome. But to be cooped up for a week in a mere box which might be transformed into a coffin—how could we endure it? Yet these foreigners endured it for half the year and seemed none the worse.

So, the love of adventure moving us, together with a desire to see how things succeeded which were 'made in France,' we accepted the captain's hospitable offer and shipped on board the *Marie* as supernumeraries, not to say superfluities. We judged it wise to take an ample supply of bread, together with sundry aids to appetite not carried by the cutter, whose crew depended mostly for flesh meat upon the fish they were able to catch, supplementing that monotonous if not meagre diet by a few onions, some potatoes, and plenty of hard ship biscuit.

Weighing anchor at daybreak, we sailed away close hauled to the north-west, in company with thirty-nine others—forty thieves, as the more frivolous of us remarked to his companions in an undertone—and before the sun was high in the heavens we had reached a shoal forming the northern point of a triangle, the other two points of which were the Land's End and the Isles of Scilly. Cutters preceded and followed us, until at last not far short of a hundred sail took up their positions and settled down for a week's work.

The system of fishing was in almost every detail unlike that adopted by our countrymen. Not only were the boats far larger and the method of keeping the fish alive totally different, but even the crab-pots or traps were of different shape and materials, and were worked in a fashion altogether French. Instead of the insular dome-shaped wicker traps with a hole in the top, the Frenchmen used pots in shape somewhat like a barrel, with one side flattened so as to serve as a bottom. Two wooden hoops formed the ends of the barrel, and the staves were represented by long laths, placed far enough apart to enable a crab or lobster to view the tempting bait swinging from inside the roof, and near enough together to prevent its escape if once it entered. The barrel was 'headed' with strong netting, ending in the centre in a hoop just large enough for the fishes to push through, and also large enough for them to crawl out, if only the men gave them time, which they never did. We set a dozen of these three-feet traps in about twenty-five fathoms of water, a cork buoy above each flying a little flag, and our neighbours to port and starboard and ahead and astern did the same; so that soon the sea for a great space was dotted with flags of every hue and combination of hues, each cutter, of course, flying its own peculiar bunting.

The English method is to pull crab-pots once in the twenty-four hours; the French, to haul at short intervals through the day, taking the traps in turn. That the latter system is to be

preferred was impressed upon us by the state of the well on board the cutter. Bait was procured by constant fishing with lines, and all the night through the cutters jogged along, often getting in dangerous proximity in spite of a sharp look-out. Our first night brought us hair-breadth escapes and anxious minds, a dense fog coming up from the south, and covering the whole fleet in an obscurity which foghorns blown by a hundred seamen failed to render innocuous. Once we thought our fate had come when a report like a cannon astern, a splintering of bulwarks, and a heeling over of the little cutter suggested that big-gun practice was going on, and that we were the target. But it was only a blundering or unfortunate neighbour, who, misjudging the carrying powers of our foghorn, had run into our starboard quarter with disastrous results to our timbers, and the loss of the nose of his own bowsprit. Happily the fog lasted only half the night, and morning brought clear weather and sunshine.

Then came a period when wealth marched through the gangway in a long procession of lobsters, crayfishes, and crabs, the first two immensely outnumbering the last. What a scene met our eyes as we gazed down into the well upon the bluejackets and marines, as we dubbed the lobsters and crayfishes! The first appeared almost black as they paraded up and down brandishing their now disabled pincers; but the great crayfishes looked absolutely gorgeous in their carapaces of burnt sienna and orange, their enormous antennæ thrust out in front or doubled back over their shoulders, and with their fan-like tails flapping them astern as the plunge of a newcomer into their midst filled them with alarm. What a pleasure to the artist as well as to the merchant to see those weird monsters emerge fresh, bright, and beautiful from their crystal dwelling-place! No prisoners confined in aquaria ever dazzled the sight and captivated the fancy and the affections half so much as those crustaceans transferred from Neptune's ocean to the ocean in miniature below the deck of the cutter, where they crawled and swam as when they rested on the rocks five and twenty fathoms under the keel.

Many incidents broke the monotony of the money-getting, and gave piquancy to the toil. The traps remained too short a time in position for a couple of lobsters or crayfishes to devour the bait and then assault each other, as is the case with crab pots worked on the English plan. Consequently, no visions of dismembered captives or litter of shed claws greeted the eyes of the Frenchmen, who had the satisfaction of knowing that all the mature indi-

viduals brought to the surface were worthy of being sent to market. But the withdrawal of the contents of the traps gave ample room for the exercise of skill, and furnished condign punishment for clumsiness and want of care. An active lobster, fencing with his shears held aloft over his head, managed to pinch the finger of his human enemy with a severity which brought tears into that gentleman's Gallic eyes ; while a gigantic crayfish standing on the top of the trap, being drawn up before he had made up his mind, marked his resignation of a contemplative for an active life by flapping his armoured tail with such violence that it lacerated the hand of an unwary fisherman. These, however, are incidents which every person dealing with active and formidable creatures like the big crustacea must be prepared for, and the injured finger and thumb found their best poultice in the thought of the money earned, and in the sight of the hundred pairs of 'biters' which formed the armoury of the keep in the centre of the ship.

Our second night was spent below decks in a vain attempt to overtake sleep. The hard timbers and the unsatisfactory atmosphere were more productive of dreams than slumber ; and weird visions of crayfishes which grew without casting their shells until they filled all the well, out of which they crawled to blockade us in our cabin, made us welcome the daylight and the fresh air with more than usual effusion. We had just settled down for another day's work when, heralded by a black cloud and a tremendous downpour of rain, so fierce a gale burst upon us from the north-west that, after hauling in our gear at great risk, nothing remained but to turn the bow to the land and make with all haste for Penzance. Even yachtsmen of the Royal Squadron would have rejoiced to see nearly a hundred cutters flying through the foam, carrying all the sail possible in order to win the prize of whole spars, and perhaps of life itself. A few of our colleagues suffered damage to their ropes and sails, but long before sunset all were anchored in Mount's Bay. So ended our cruise and our acquaintance with the *Marie* and her three men and a boy.

During the next week the fleet were absent from the fishing-ground, having sailed with their lobsters and crayfishes to Cherbourg and other ports for the market in Paris. At the end of that time, while standing on his doorstep and gazing seawards, the writer saw on the horizon what looked like a flock of gigantic gulls or gannets sailing slowly in immense circles, and he knew that once more a French fleet had seized the entrance to the English Channel.

JOHN ISABELL.

## *Broken Glass.*

THE March winds had dried up the mud in the village street, and the ground beneath Mrs. Skeemer's bow-window was smooth and hard. Small boys, in groups, were spinning tops. A ring had been drawn on the level surface, and the boys were pegging at one another's tops, the object being to fling one top with such force on to another that the rival plaything was either split, or dented, or at least knocked out of the circle. Some tops had gained a notoriety for either splitting or resisting powers; others, bright and new, had yet a reputation to make.

Mrs. Skeemer lived in the house that looked straight down the village street. Of its kind the house was a large one, two-storeyed, with attics above, a door on one side, and a big bow-window on the other. Probably it had been a shop, which would account for the largeness of the window, but not in Mrs. Skeemer's time, for in this house she had spent fifteen years of married life and twenty years of widowhood. Her husband had been a cattle-dealer, wealthy by repute; indeed, he might have saved money had he been able to close or start a bargain with, say, three out of the six glasses of whisky which, he assured his wife, were indispensable to bring a negotiation to a successful conclusion. Still, as he frequently added with pride, no one could say he had ever seen him drunk, only a little market-fresh, and that in the cause of duty. One Saturday night, after an unusually busy day, the call came to Skeemer to abandon business and carouse. Then it was discovered that his savings were *nil*; his possessions consisted merely of three or four meadows, a few acres of arable land—all heavily mortgaged—and the house. By judicious management and tireless economy Mrs. Skeemer had been able to stop on in the house and there bring up her one daughter, Matilda.

'Tilda had been born in the first year of her parents' married life. As a baby she had had no beauty to commend her; she was

one of those children who have the misfortune to be born old. Her face was pinched and wizened, her limbs large and loose-set ; 'she had a rare frame,' said her father, with an eye always on the look-out for bone in a bullock. Indeed, 'Tilda, with her red hair, gaunt frame, and awkward movements, unconsciously called to mind a cross between a Polled Devon and an Irish home-bred. She had given the lie to the popular notion that an ugly baby makes a good-looking woman, for she had grown up with the face nature had given her at her birth ; and if ever she had had the good fortune to possess an admirer, it could not have been beauty of form or visage that had attracted him. But no admirer had ever come her way. From twenty to twenty-five the dreams common to all healthy-minded girls had been hers ; till thirty they lingered as a hope against hope ; now, at thirty-five, they were being heroically consigned to the limbo of the might-have-beens. Yet even now the woman longed for a swain, were it only someone to walk out with on Sunday afternoons, to relieve the monotony of existence in her mother's cottage, and to show the womenfolk of the village that she was not set apart from them by an inability to excite interest, if not admiration.

Matilda had been early apprenticed to 'the dressmaking,' and as soon as she had thoroughly learnt her trade she had returned home to set up on her own account, and her earnings to no small extent augmented the annuity which Mrs. Skeemer had procured from the wreck of her husband's business. In the bow-window she sat and sewed all day, as she had sat and sewed for the last fifteen years. Painted on the three front panes of glass was her name, with 'Dressmaker' beneath in Roman letters, and, under all, the words 'Ladies' own materials made up.'

The last six months the village had been unusually full of life, for the church was undergoing a much-needed restoration ; a Norwich firm of builders were doing the work, and most of the workmen were lodging in cottages or in any house in the village where they could find accommodation. Mrs. Skeemer had tried, but failed, to let her empty upstair rooms ; gossip said the would-be lodgers fought shy of Matilda.

The church was nearly finished, and the scaffolding was gradually being pulled down ; soon the village would return to its state of settled calm.

But, judging by the four dresses hanging from the walls of Matilda's workroom, it was evident that the girls of the place had not lost their opportunity. The dresses were wedding garments,

and on this windy March afternoon 'Tilda was busy putting the finishing touches to a fifth.

'Seems ter me this here church ha' brought a proper lot o' trade ter th' willage,' said Mrs. Skeemer, who, owing to stress of business, was helping her daughter by basting a lining into a skirt. 'Sich times never wor, nor never will be agin, I reckon. Fancy five wedden' dresses all made at once; that's afore th' time o' Palmer's, or Caley's o' Norwich!'

'Yes,' said 'Tilda, with a sigh, 'it ha' brought about plenty o' courten' and given' in marriage.'

'And a lot o' trolleying mawthers they be tew,' said Mrs. Skeemer, breaking her cotton in an effort to give emphasis to her words. 'Hussies, I call 'em. Look at that there Charlotte Knights—catched another, afore her husband, who wor only took last Nowember, be cold in th' ground. 'Tain't decent,' she added. 'Fare ter me all th' gals in th' willage be clean gone off their heads.'

'Yes, they ha' been in a flutter, mother, ever since th' workmen come.'

'Flutter and tutter tew,' snorted Mrs. Skeemer. 'As I told Mrs. Grapes t'other night when her tew gals comed ter be tried on, I wouldn't ha' my gal exhibiting herself in th' street as some folks ha' let theirs dew, guyed out in all their finery and Sunday clothes o' weekdays, so as ter pick up a husband, be he stone-mason, carpenter, plumber, or even one o' them architeck's clerks. Still, 'Tilda,' her mother went on, and there was an aggrieved note in her voice, 'I did think when there wor all this here marryen' going on yer might ha' 'tracted a mate. It be time yer begins ter think about it, if yer ever going tew.'

'Me, mother! Oh, I never give sich things a thought. I be past th' time o' day, I be. Besides, I ain't 'tractive enow,' said the girl, with some bitterness.

'Oh, well,' answered Mrs. Skeemer, 'if all these here men be only looken' out for a pretty face, they be a set o' blessed fules, and desarves all they gets, and yer be well out o' th' muck.'

Matilda did not answer, but turned her face to the window and watched the boys playing with their peg-tops. Suddenly there was a cry of 'Splits' and a crash of broken glass, as a top bounced through the window and fell with a bang on the floor; then a scamper of feet, and before mother and daughter could get to the door every boy was out of sight.

'Young warmens!' screamed Mrs. Skeemer, 'I ha' complained

ter th' pliceman afore about them boys playen' under our winder, but that there pliceman ain't worth narthen. There be a whole pane o' glass gone. I'll skin th' young warmen whole when I catches on him. Who was it, 'Tilda ?'

Shrill yells proceeded from the little lane which ran by the side of Mrs. Skeemer's house, and a big black-bearded man came into view, dragging a small boy by the ear.

'It worn't me—it worn't me, I tells yer,' howled the boy; 'it wor young Armine Skipper. He did it; he pegged mine with his great owd boxer, and that split my top and flew through th' winder. It worn't me, 'Tilda Skeemer,' he began again, for by this time the man had dragged him to where Mrs. Skeemer, purple with rage, was standing. 'It wor Armine, and he ha' split my fiver, he ha,' he added in a whimper.

'I don't care who't be. Dew yer hold him, my gude man; I'll pay him,' and Mrs. Skeemer dived back into the room and returned with a cane yard-measure, which she flourished viciously.

'Oh, don't hit him, mum,' said the man. 'He be fairly frightened. I be a glazier, and I'll put th' winder right for yer in no time.' Saying this he let the boy wriggle out of his grasp, and smiled as he watched him fly howling down the street.

'Yer ortn't ter ha' let him go; he should ha' been made a 'xample of,' grumbled Mrs. Skeemer. 'Plague take th' brats; housen ain't safe ter live in nowadays.'

'I'll sune mend it for yer. I ha' got a few bits o' spare glass over from th' church winders. I'll put that in for yer arter tea.'

'Yer very kind,' said Matilda. 'Me and mother'll be much obliged if yer will; and if yer'll tell us what it costs——'

'Oh, I'll dew it for love,' broke in the man, laughing, as he turned to go.

For the first time in her life Matilda blushed. She pushed her mother in at the door, which she shut, then turned to the window and watched the man till he passed out of sight.

'Wunnerful nice talken' kind o' chap that there man be. Wery obligin', I must say. What be his name, 'Tilda?' asked Mrs. Skeemer.

'William Winter, I believe,' 'Tilda answered. 'Most on 'em be very respectable men what ha' been employed at th' restoration.'

'Yer see, these here workmen bain't like others,' went on Mrs. Skeemer. 'They dew narthen but go from church ter church, and that makes 'em kind o' religious-like. Why, they

spends half their time in church, and that keep 'em quiet and steady, I s'pose. But, 'Tilda, did yer hear what he said? How as he 'ud mend th' owd winder for love. Shouldn't wonder if he worn't struck in th' gizzard with yer all at once.'

'Mother, don't carry on so. What next, I should like ter know?' said Matilda angrily.

'Why, I shall be losing my 'Tilda if I don't mind.'

'Don't talk sich nonsense, don't. Oh, mother, how can yer put sich thoughts inter my head?'

'Those thoughts were there afore I spoke,' said Mrs. Skeemer knowingly. 'Never mind, 'Tilda, marriages are made in heaven, and glassen winders are smashed on earth; and when a man say he be going ter dew th' job for love—well, there, if yer can't put tew and tew tergether I can. But yer allus wor so highly strung and narvous that I'll ha' ter lend yer a hand; still, that's better than being tew forward, 'specially with th' men-folk. I'll go and put my bonnet on, and go down ter th' butcher's and see if I can't get tew or three chops, or a little porks ter bakes, and we'll ask that there Mr. Winter ter supper. If he mend our winder, yer must try and mend his heart; I see that want a patch on it.'

'Oh, mother,' pleaded Matilda, 'don't be in sich a hurry with things.'

'Dew yer go on with yar sewing and leave things ter me.' And saying this Mrs. Skeemer put on her bonnet and hustled out into the street.

Matilda stood by and watched the glazier as he cut the old putty out of the window. She saw that he was strong, healthy, and good-looking, moreover he was middle-aged; he had reached the time of life when a man should settle and make a home for himself. By judicious questioning she learnt that he was still unblessed with a life-companion, and by the time he had placed in position the new sheet of glass, and was rolling the soft putty in his hands, fancy had built him a house and given it a fitting mistress. She was awakened from her dreams by a sharp tap on the glass, and as Winter ran the knife up and down the sides he remarked, 'Well, there, that be done. Did yer find out which boy broke it?'

'No, and don't s'pose we shall.'

'Oh, well, least said, soonest mended,' he laughingly replied, as he gathered up his tools. 'That didn't take long ter right-side.'

'No, yer seem a masterhand at yar trade,' replied 'Tilda, with

a look of admiration. ‘Gude workmen like yer be scarce about here, anyways.’

‘Be that so?’ said Winter eagerly. ‘Hain’t yer got a glazier in th’ village?’

‘No, there ain’t none nigher nor Stalham, six miles off, and he be very dear,’ the woman answered.

‘Be that so?’ said Winter meditatively. ‘Well,’ he went on, after a moment’s silence, ‘my job at th’ church be finished this week, and I be getten’ tired o’ journeying about from place ter place. I say ter myself t’other night as I wor getten’ ter bed: “Winter, that be time as yer give over jobben’ about for contractors, and got married and set up for yarselv in some willage like this here.” My mind ha’ run on that notion a deal since then. Don’t yer think there be sense in what I say?’ and he gazed fixedly at Matilda.

‘Deed I dew,’ put in Mrs. Skeemer from the doorway. ‘At yar time o’ life that be only fit and proper as yer should marry a quiet, respectable gal, one as could earn a little herself tew.’ Unconsciously she inclined her head towards her daughter.

‘Well, afore I thinks about marryen’ I ha’ got ter be sure there be a liven’ ter be got round these parts,’ said the man.

‘Yer could get a liven’ right enow,’ answered Mrs. Skeemer. ‘Th’ place be wunnerful gain for that, bain’t it, ‘Tilda?’

‘I should think so,’ said the girl.

‘Think so, indeed! I be wholly sarten about it. Why, if there be a winder broke we ha’ ter wait till a travell’en’ glazier pass through th’ willage, or send arter th’ Stalham chap, and he ‘on’t come ‘less there be several jobs and he can make a day on it. Half th’ owd women ha’ ter stuff up th’ holes with rags, or paste a bit o’ brown paper over ter keep out th’ draught. Yer wouldn’t be hard up for a job! Only yer’d want ter get married sun; yer’d be kind o’ dull in th’ willage when all yar mates wor gone.’

‘Oh! as ter that I sha’n’t be long about courten’,’ Winter made answer. ‘I ha’ got a matter o’ twenty pound put by, and with another five pound or so I could get enow furniture ter start with.’

‘Course yer could,’ said the delighted Mrs. Skeemer, and she gently inclined her elbow in the direction of her daughter’s ribs. ‘P’raps yer might pick up one as had five or ten pounds put by.’ Tilda was conscious that Mrs. Skeemer was vigorously jerking her head at her, and trusted the movement might pass unperceived by Winter. ‘Come yer inter kitchen, Mr. Winter—I ha’ got

some chops in th' pan—and ha' a bit o' supper and a glass o' stout along o' us. If yer ha' put th' winder in for love, yer can stop and ha' a bit o' wittles along o' me and my gal. There be a million<sup>1</sup> pie, tew, 'Tilda made last Tuesday. I should like yer ter taste on it, just ter see what a gude cook she be.'

For the greater part of that night Matilda's red head turned and tossed on its pillow. Could there be truth in her mother's suggestions? Had she, indeed, excited interest in this big, black-bearded man? What if he should want to make her his wife? Wife—she thrilled at the word, she, who in all her thirty-five years had never once felt love nor hoped to arouse it!

In the morning her mother greeted her as 'Mrs. Winter.' To Matilda's blushing exclamation, 'Oh, don't, mother!' Mrs. Skeemer replied, 'Well, ain't his name Winter? I ha' wintered and summered him, as th' sayen' go, and I seed in his eyes last night as he meant haven' of yer, 'Tilda, so there 'tis!'

'But there be th' trade, mother; he seemed ter want ter make sure o' that afore anything.'

'Course he dew; he be a long-headed chap, or else he wouldn't cast his eyes on yer, 'Tilda. He'll get trade. L U V sune overcome all difficulties, don't you make no mistake on it, my gal.'

Matilda always helped with the housework before she sat down to her dressmaking, and this morning, as she swept out her bedroom, she noticed a spider's web high up on a top pane of glass. She lifted her broom to sweep it down, and inadvertently hit the pane. The sound sent a whole succession of thoughts racing through her brain; she paused to consider, then yielded to temptation, and the sharp end of the broom went crashing through the glass.

'Mother,' she shouted down the stairs, 'misfortunes never dew come single-like. I ha' just broke another winder.'

'Lor' bless th' gal! ha' yer? Well, that dew be a coincident, ter be sure. I ha' just cracked one o' th' panes in th' backus: set th' owd pail tew close ter it when I went ter pump th' water at th' sink. Fare ter me we be maken' a trade already.'

The next morning a note was sent to William Winter, in which it was stated that if he thought of starting a business Mrs. Skeemer would be pleased to be allowed to become his first customer.

Accordingly Winter put in an appearance that evening, and again Matilda stood by and watched him as he worked. He told her he had thought over her mother's suggestions, and was

<sup>1</sup> Pumpkin.

determined to carry them out, and that as soon as he saw a chance of making a living in the village, and had put by another five pounds, he should get married. The girl turned away to hide her confusion, a wild tide of hope surging at her heart. And yet when he was gone, and she had time to recall the incident, she remembered that though he had spoken of matrimony he had said nothing to lead her to imagine she was the woman of his choice. When her mother next alluded to the subject she called her attention to the fact.

‘Lawks a mussy me, gal, proper thinken’ men don’t go at it like roaren’ bulls,’ was Mrs. Skeemer’s answer. ‘They kind o’ dance round it for a bit. Don’t tell me as how he’d ha’ talked over all these plans, which his gude head seemed stuffed full on, if yer worn’t th’ gal he had set his heart on. I fare ter think he be a kind o’ nervous man, and them sorts never likes ter show theirselves tew eager. But just look at his eyes; they keep searchen’ arter yer like a hen’s arter barley.’

Matilda agreed with her mother that his eyes were very fine, and perhaps they did speak the words his tongue refused to utter.

‘In course, they dew,’ said the sanguine Mrs. Skeemer. ‘Why, I remembers in days gone by how yar poor father, when he comed home from market and called up ter see me, couldn’t sometimes utter a word, but did all his courten’ with his eyes, poor man.’

‘But William Winter be a glazier, and don’t tend no markets,’ said ‘Tilda dubiously.

‘Still I ha’ known yar poor father nonplussed and speechless on the days when there worn’t no market. Men be like some children what sits staren’ hard at a cake and never tells yer they wants a bite on it, and yet at last yer obliged ter go and cut ‘em a slice. But there, my ‘Tilda, don’t yer fash yarself; if he ‘on’t cut th’ cake, maybe I’ll lend him a hand.’

A week passed by, and, much to ‘Tilda’s and her mother’s mortification, Winter did not make it his business to call again. Matilda only saw him as he passed the bow-window on his return from work, and she had to content herself with a smile and friendly nod. The second Sunday of their acquaintance was a day of great humiliation; for the girl, well versed in the etiquette of courtship, had expected him to arrive and take her for a walk. All day long she sat in her out-of-door garments, waiting, and waiting in vain, for Winter failed to put in an appearance.

'I can't make no sense o' th' man,' said Mrs. Skeemer, when hope had been given up. 'I'll break another winder ter-morrow, see if I don't.'

'Tain't no use,' said Matilda, despair in her voice. 'Besides, we can't allus be payen' out hard-earnt money for new glass.'

'Ah, that's where yer makes a mistake,' said her undaunted parent. 'Th' salt cost money afore yer can ha' it ter put on th' bird's tail. I ha' made up my mind ter catch him for yer, and I'll dew it yet.'

So on the morrow there was another pane of glass to mend, and yet another before the week was out, and with each visit Winter paid Matilda's passion grew more and more intense. She had almost brought herself to believe that her affection was returned, and the man's answer to a timid question as to the state of trade made her desperate. So slack was work, Winter declared, he had almost made up his mind to leave the village. That night the girl resolved to put into action a plan she had long conceived. She rose from her bed, dressed herself in the dark, crept down-stairs, and noiselessly opened the back door, buoyed up for her venture by the phantom of Winter fleeing from a village of unbroken window-panes. She made her way to the coal-house and picked up a hammer, which she hid in her cloak; then she looked out of the gate at the deserted street stretching away on either hand.

The moon was at the full, and one side of the street was brightly illuminated, while the other lay in deep shadow. Matilda moved on tiptoe down the dark side, hardly daring to breathe, terrified at her own temerity. At the end of the village she paused, her scheme yet unaccomplished, trembling from head to foot in the fear of detection. Drawing her long cloak tighter round her, she withdrew into the shadow of a gable-ended cottage, and gazed earnestly at the opposite house. The windows shone green in the moonlight; a conviction came over her that she was being watched—surely the blind in the little dormer window was being pulled cautiously aside. With a great effort at self-command she stayed motionless in her hiding-place, her eyes fixed on the window—after all it was but a crease in the blind. She resisted the longing to rush home; the thought of William Winter steadied her.

'S'pose he leave because o' th' trade. This be my first and only chance,' she muttered to herself. 'Oh, Gawd, I dew want ter be like other folk, ter ha' a husband o' my wery own. I will be a gude and loven' wife. If men only knew what women would

dew for love!' William Winter must not know now; but some day, when she was married, she would tell him of the agony she had suffered for his sake, and he would kiss away the tears from her ugly face and stroke her coarse red hair. 'Now or never,' she gasped, and, tightly grasping the long handle of the coal-hammer, drew it from beneath her cloak. Going up to the window of the house whose shadow was sheltering her, she raised her arm and with all her force drove the pointed pick-end through the pane. She was prepared for a crash and a shower of glass, but to her surprise she found the sharp instrument had made but a small hole; there was a bang, and a little tinkle of falling pieces as she drew the hammer out again, that was all.

'That's enow for this one,' she murmured, as she passed on to the next house. The glass fell with a crash, and she fled up the street, leaving the next few cottages untouched. Then she paused to listen, not a sound was to be heard but the beating of her own heart; she broke out into a cold sweat, but again summoning up courage she ran quickly to the next window, which she treated in the same way, breaking one at intervals all the way home. Flinging the hammer into the shed, with boots in hand she crept upstairs, passing the door whence issued Mrs. Skeemer's loud snores, and threw herself sobbing on her bed. Presently she crept to the window and lifted the blind; the street lay silent, bathed in moonlight. No one was about, no one seemed to have heard the breaking glass; she might conclude her action would pass undiscovered.

Mrs. Skeemer had occasion to visit the village shop before breakfast, and she came back all aglow with excitement.

'Yar sweetheart ha' got a deal o' trade on his hands ter-day, 'Tilda,' she cried. 'I seed him goin' down th' street with half a crake o' glass on a frame under his arm. Then I met that there lazy warmen o' a p'lliceman, and he come up ter me and say, "I understand, Mrs. Skeemer, as how yer ha' had a lot o' winders broke lately, hain't yer?" I say, "Yes, tew or tree"; and then he had th' imperence ter say as how that seemed a wunnerful coincident, that did; for so sune as that there Winter set up in th' glaziering for hisself everyone's winders got broke, and he wor going to make a deal o' inquisition about it. Lor', gal, yer 'on't believe me when I tells yer half th' winders down our side o' th' street be found broke t' mornen'. He say some people did ha' their suspicions, they did.'

Matilda turned away at this remark, but Mrs. Skeemer was

far too interested in her story to notice the hot rush of blood to her daughter's cheeks.

'I up and say, "Ah ! yer be a deal o' use for a pliceman, yer be," went on the woman. "'If yer only did yar duty o' seeing arter th' parish, instead o' sitten' in public-housen, yer wouldn't be patchen' things as yer didn't ought onter gude honest folk like William Winter."

'He say, "What dew yer mean ?" and began ter get tetchy-like. So I tells him that wor them young warmen o' boys, as th' street be inwested with, as broke them winders. I tell him only a week or tew back one o' their tops came spinnen' through one o' mine, and I say, "If yer'd only use th' eyes th' Almighty gived yer, but which yer mostly keep for looken' inter th' bottom o' quart pots, yer'd see their tops." He say, "Tops be out." "Yes," I say, "tops be out, but tip-cats be in" ; and I pointed ter half a score o' them young warmens, with sticks and tip-cats, playen' in th' street. "That's how we poor folk have ter keep menden' o' our winders," I say, "and if I'd anything ter dew with th' law I'd make th' pliceman pay for 'em." He looked kind o' comical-like and sheeped, I can tell yer ; he never said narthen, but went off double quick, and I seed him when he thought I worn't looken', go and cuff th' boys as wor playen' and take away their tip-cats. Tryen' ter make out yar sweetheart a kind o' ramscallien o' a thief !'

All that day Matilda suffered great agitation of mind. She started at each approaching footstep, and as the policeman walked up the street the conviction seized her that he was making straight for the cottage, and she felt compelled to go outside and lock herself into the coal-house. Mrs. Skeemer could not refrain from commenting on her behaviour.

'Lor', 'Tilda, I can't think what kind o' ail yer. Yer keep jifflen' about, and seem ter be starten' out o' yar shoon every moment. But there, I reckon I know what 'tis. The love-fever ha' got hold on yer, and yar man don't get no for'arder, that's what 'tis.'

Matilda bowed her head over her work, and remarked as how she did feel all over alike.

'Ah !' replied her mother, 'I knew yer did. I seed Winter arter dinner-time, and told him to come over and put some glass in that there old cowcumber frame. I ha' a mind ter grow a cowcumber t' year. Lor ! his face lit up proper, and he say, "I'll come, Mrs. Skeemer. Th' trade be comen' on proper now." I say, "That's right, and yer'll sune ha' ter get married." He laugh

and say, "That's so, Mrs. Skeemer." So don't be down-hearted ; he'll pop th' question afore long, mark my words on it.'

'Yer be right kind, mother,' the girl answered, a tear falling on to her work. 'Tain't everyone ha' got a mother like yer be.' But for all her brave words, Matilda was very sad at heart.

In the following week a knock came at the door, and Mrs. Skeemer poked her head round the bow-window and exclaimed :

'It be that there gal, Julia Hitchcock.'

'Oh, dear, dear,' said Matilda, 'she ha' come arter that there dove-grey dress o' hers, and I ha' only got it cut out. I ha' been so busy along o' these fandanglen' wedden' dresses I hain't had time ter think o' hers.'

Julia Hitchcock, rosy-cheeked and smiling, came into the room, and Matilda explained the situation.

'Tain't no matters, 'Tilda ; 'deed, I be rather glad, 'cos I wants a bit o' alteration,' she answered, simpering. She took the string from a parcel. 'Look yer here, I wants yer ter put a bit o' this white chiffongy stuff round th' neck, and a bit o' lace round th' cuffs, and dab a bow or tew o' lace and chiffong anywhere yer thinks it would look nice and proper-like.'

Mrs. Skeemer was immensely interested. 'Be yer agoing ter a ball ? Maybe yer going ter be a bridesmaid at one o' these wedden's ?'

'Well, it be like this,' laughed the girl. 'When I ordered this here dress th' chap as I ha' been walken' out with—he be a mod'r'ate careful kind o' feller, he be—didn't think as how he could afford ter marry me yet awhiles. But he ha' done wunnerful well o' late, and we be going ter get wed—leastways, he be plaguing th' life out o' me ter get wed at once, so I s'pose I must as sune as the banns be out-arst. They be up for next Sunday ; yer must come and hear 'em, 'Tilda,' she simpered. 'I thought if yer fussed that there dove-grey up with them bits o' white stuff, that 'ud dew for me ter be married in. I see in th' papers that be all th' fashion ter be married in a walken' dress, so dew yer have it done by this day tree weeks.'

Matilda's eyes were fixed on the chiffon that lay in her hands. Very slowly she asked the question : 'And who be yer going ter marry ?'

'Why, don't yer know ?' cried Julia, surprised that a fact of such supreme importance to herself had not reached the ears of the village dressmaker. 'Why, I be going ter marry Mr. William Winter, th' glazier. He and I ha' walked out th' last six weeks.

He tell me yer and yar mother ha' been wery gude customers ter him. I'll drop in and tell yer all about it one afternune; I be busy ter-day. Gude-day.'

The finery she held dropped from Matilda's nerveless fingers; she clutched at a chair for support.

Mrs. Skeemer stood with open mouth, watching the young girl's retreating figure, her face purple, as if a fit were imminent.

'There, there, there, ter think on it,' she burst out at length. 'I never had anything give me sich a tarn in all my life. My heart's in my mouth, and my liver's where my heart ought ter be. Ter think as that great, ugly, black-bearded blackguard should ha' sarved us like this. Here ha' we been acosseten' on him up, agetten' on him trade, and I afryen' o' th' best pork chops ter put inter his great, ugly stummick, and he ha' been maken' love ter yer; and now—'

'But he never did make love ter me,' interrupted Matilda, dry-eyed, but with a strange choking feeling in her throat. Mentally she had projected her vision down the long vista of time, and saw herself sitting in that window, making gay dresses for the happy and dark ones for the mourners, as she had sat and toiled for the last fifteen years.

'Now don't make matters wus by adden' lies ter th' job,' snapped Mrs. Skeemer. 'Yer said as how he did it with his eyes, and I seed him, tew, th' mean scoundrel. Gude customers, I should think we ha' been, that be th' worst cut of all!' She went to a drawer and took out a paper. '"For repairing cowcumber frame and warious winders, glass and time, thirteen and ninepence,"' she read. She banged the bill down on the table. 'Dang him, 'Tilda, he shall wait for his money, I can tell yer. And look yer here, my gal, if ever yer goes sweethearten' agen, don't yer go in for a glazier, for that come tew expensive, that dew, a-repairing o' th' broken glass.'

C. F. MARSH.

## *Lord Lindsey in the Civil War.*

‘DARWCANSIR figures of immense whiskerage . . . as if Frederick, Gustavus, Cromwell, William Conqueror, and Alexander the Great were not worth while speaking of henceforth.’ Some critics of Carlyle might say that this passage in *Frederick the Second* fitted well his own *French Revolution*; though, as a fact, Carlyle’s colossi, compared with, say, Lamartine’s, are not so numerous—Mirabeau and Danton, with one angry glimpse of Napoleon in the last flash. But if there has been a tendency to think of the French Revolution in heroes—of the ‘nether fire’ sort—such exaggeration has not been committed in regard to the seventeenth-century English Revolution. It may be the Pym of Browning’s stormy drama, perhaps the Strafford too, are cast in a larger mould than the historian can approve of; but then English people view neither in the light of *Strafford*. Cromwell is to them the only giant; on the one side Hampden, on the other Falkland, are the two great patriots of the time. And yet it is hard to look into contemporary chronicle and not be moved by the shining quality, the sacrifice of self, the conscientious scruple, the loyalty, which, during the Civil War, inspired the life and made glorious the death of many a man whose name is not by any means so familiar to the reader of English history to-day. Of Paulet, ‘the great Marquis,’ and of Gage, who, by his daring march from Oxford, raised the siege of Basing House, something has been written recently. Robert Bertie, first Earl of Lindsey, and at the outset general of the King’s army, may not touch the imagination as Hampden or as Falkland does, but it would be hard to name any man of those times whose loyalty was put to a sterner ordeal than his and came better out of it in the end. Besides, Lindsey was a soldier who, in Holland and elsewhere, had studied the practice of war with the zeal which the chief soldiers of our own day, Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, inculcate so earnestly; and, had he been in effective command, Edgehill might

well have been won for Charles I. ; whereas it was a fight claimed by both sides as a victory, but significant of the ultimate success of Parliament. It was Falkland who, at the close of the day, urged Wilmot to gather his horse together, and by a stroke end the war there and then. In this he showed how completely he had failed to perceive the depth and strength of the current that drove on the opposition to the King. The total annihilation of Essex's force at Edgehill would not, as Falkland supposed, have ended the opposition in England ; but it would have given the King a great advantage at the start. He might not then have been compelled to turn back after the battle of Brentford, as he actually did later on ; and, London once at his mercy, Parliament must for a time have been crushed.

Robert Bertie was born in 1582. He was the son of a famed Elizabethan man of war, Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and grandson of Richard Bertie and the Duchess of Suffolk, who, for their religion, were obliged to fly the country in Mary's reign. The Earls of Lindsey became, in the eighteenth century, the Dukes of Ancaster. Lady Caroline Bertie, daughter of the second duke, married George Dewar of Enham, in Hampshire, the writer's ancestor. The dukedom died out with the fourth Duke of Ancaster, and the older title was revived and has existed since, the family seat being, as of old, in Lincolnshire. Lady Georgina Bertie, some fifty years ago, brought out a book called *Five Generations of a Loyal House*, which, however, being uncompleted, did not trace the fortunes of the Berties beyond the time of Peregrine, Lord Willoughby. This Peregrine sprang on one side from a line of heroes. Naunton calls him one of the 'Queen's first swordsmen.' One story of him is that on a certain occasion, deeply affronted, whilst helpless in hand and foot through illness, he proposed to fight a duel holding a portion of his rapier between his teeth. It helps, at any rate, to illustrate the reputation of the man. Robert Bertie, beginning to study warfare at the age of fourteen, was able to make a soldier's reputation by the time the war with Spain was concluded in James I.'s reign. He was present as a lad at several sieges in Europe, at Amiens, and at Cadiz where he was knighted in 1596. Four years later he was at the battle of Newport, in which 300 Englishmen were killed, and was three times unhorsed. A few years later Bertie was with Levinson and Mounson in the expedition undertaken to divert the Spaniards from Ireland, and notable through the capture of the great carrack, valued at a million crowns ; the English with

their eight galleys defeating the Spaniards, who had eleven vessels, and landing a force in Portugal at the same time. Thus, at twenty, Bertie had gained much experience of war on land and at sea. After the peace between England and Spain in 1604 he lived chiefly on his estate in Lincolnshire. There belong to this period legal contentions with the 'fennemen,' and a claim for the earldom of Oxford and the post of Lord Great Chamberlain, decided, in regard to the latter point, in his favour; but these are of no general interest.

According to Clarendon, though not a spendthrift with his inheritance, Bertie was not at pains to improve his finances, preferring to spend 'his youth and vigour of his age in military actions and commands abroad.' Lloyd gives a different picture of him at this period, saying that he had learned at Venice and at Florence that 'merchandise is consistent with nobility.' War, however, was, no doubt, the real business of Bertie's life, as it had been of his father's. Soon after Charles I. came to the throne he was created Earl of Lindsey; and in 1628 was made Admiral of the Fleet upon the assassination of Buckingham at Portsmouth. His career in the King's service previous to Edgehill is summed up in that intensely interesting work, Gardiner's *History of the Great Civil War*, as one of 'patient submission to conditions that could only result in failure.' No English king, fallen on hard times, has ever been served with more devotion by his supporters than was Charles. We have come almost to regard 'loyalty' as connoting, historically, the Stuart cause. The absolute devotion to the cause they believed in, without a thought of self gain, of men like Lindsey, Edmund Verney, Astley, or, to mention one of quite a different class and type, Izaak Walton, must endure as priceless national treasure. It is a possession esteemed by all who care for their country; those who still take sides with King or Parliament have equally the right to share in the pride of it. To Lindsey there is the added credit that his loyalty was unshaken by humiliating service and, at the end, by a slight which he felt deeply. Several times before the beginning of the Civil War Lindsey was in command of a fleet that put out to sea on expeditions in which failure and humiliation seemed to be courted. There was the occasion when the fleet, fitted out by Noy's ship-money device, that was resorted to on the pretext of defending the coast from pirates, paraded the Channel, and was exposed to the angry ridicule of the people. As sure of humiliation was the last attempt made to relieve Rochelle after the death

of Buckingham, when the masterfulness of Richelieu was at length on the point of breaking down the resistance of the Huguenots. It is a mean page in the history of England's foreign policy that refers to Buckingham's war with France undertaken with an insincere zeal for the Huguenots. To be used in such a service, even if there had been a chance of defeating Richelieu, could only have been distasteful to a man like Lindsey.

When the Civil War was inevitable it was natural that the King should place in command of his forces a soldier of experience and mettle like Lindsey, in whom implicit confidence, he knew, could be reposed. Lindsey's influence, too, especially in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, was powerful. The gentlemen of these counties would come most readily to his call. His first service for the King in the Civil War was rendered in his own county. Upon the failure to seize the five members the King left London, and in the spring of 1642 appeared before Hull and demanded that Sir John Hotham should surrender to him the city, in which there was a large store of ammunition held for the Parliament. Lindsey was appointed general of the forces, and was directed with a body of trainbands to prepare the way for an assault on the city. It was quite a hopeless enterprise. Clarendon says that Lindsey was 'a little troubled and out of countenance that he should appear the general without an army.' However, with such horse as he had with him he rode near the town and observed the situation. At first there was no sign of hostility made by the defenders, but presently it was seen that the walls were being manned and the works repaired against an assault. It was unmistakably the beginning of armed opposition to the Crown.

During the few months following the King's discomfiture at Hull—for the Royalists were not able to assault the town—both sides were intent on arming for the struggle, and in August the Royalist standard was formally raised at Nottingham. Meanwhile, Lindsey was learning that he could not, as commander-in-chief, expect to have control over the supremely important side of the Royalist force, the cavalry! Rupert, impatient of discipline, would only take orders from the King himself. There is no doubt that this suited very well the King's own policy of not allowing too much power to be in the hands of any one of his subjects, even the most proven in loyalty. From Nottingham the King went west to the Severn Valley, adding to his force as he went, and thence turned south, feeling strong enough to march to London. He

passed Northampton and other Midland towns garrisoned by the Parliamentary army without striking at them. While resting at Edgcott he first learnt, through a messenger from Rupert, that Essex was hurrying up behind, and was only seven miles distant at Kineton. The bulk of the Royalists did not imagine that the Parliamentary force would do anything but melt away at the first set battle; but to continue on the way to Whitehall in triumph, before crushing out the opposition of Essex, was, even to those who were flushed by the success of the Royalists against Fienne's Horse in the recent affair at Powick Bridge, a hazardous plan. At the advice of Rupert, the King had his army drawn up on the steep spot known as Edgehill. Banbury, garrisoned by the Parliamentary army, lay between the King and the way to London; so that, with Essex at his rear, a battle was imperative.

Lindsey now recognised that he could serve no useful purpose by retaining the shadow of power as general of the army. Not only did Rupert's commission exempt him from all orders save the King's,<sup>1</sup> but the King during the march had paid much heed to his nephew's advice. Rupert had sketched out the tactics, the 'figure,' in the battle to be fought against the Parliamentary force; Lindsey, trained in the Dutch school of war, had other plans; the King preferred the former's suggestion. Therefore, before the battle of Edgehill began, Lindsey resigned his post, and the King chose the Earl of Forth in his stead. Edgehill, the first set battle of the Civil War, was fought on October 23, 1642. As Essex showed that he had no intention of attacking the Royalists in the position of great natural strength they held, and it was impossible to march safely away, Charles's force came down into the lower ground, into the Valley of the Red Horse—a name, as Monteith says, appropriate on that fierce Sunday of the first battle in the war. The artillery of the Royalist army covered the force in its descent, and as it formed for battle below. In the centre were the foot-soldiers, and on the right and left wings were bodies of horse commanded, respectively, by Rupert and Wilmot. The arrangement of Essex's army seems roughly to have corresponded with that of the King. The Royalists were stronger in horse, and Essex could not expect the immediate arrival of Hampden, who was marching to him with a body of men. Crom-

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion during the march, Falkland, on the King's behalf, gave some direction to Rupert, who took it very ill. 'He could not,' says Clarendon, 'have directed his passion against any man who would feel or regard it less'—a touch which well portrays the serenity of Falkland.

well was present at Edgehill with the foot, and a curious story was spread about after the battle that he had fled from the field. Several writers believed in this story, and one even moralised upon it, but it has not been credited in the least by later serious historians. Cromwell, however, had evidently not the chance of taking a leading part at Edgehill.

The Royalists were hot for the fight, in the main sure of winning; but it would be wrong to imagine that they entered upon it, one and all, in the rollicking spirit of the 'gay cavalier.' There was a high seriousness in the mood of more than one man who was to be in the forefront of battle that day. In the Warwick Memoirs there has been preserved a gem indeed, in the prayer before action of Sir Jacob Astley—'O Lord! Thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me. March on, boys.' Lindsey believed and declared that he would lose his life at Edgehill, just as Falkland did on the morning of the first battle of Newbury. He intended, he told some of his friends, 'to lead his regiment as a colonel, where he would dye.'

Rupert was not of the sort who stop to pray. He charged almost as soon as his men were arrayed; making not a frontal attack, but, by a sweeping movement, falling on the flank of the horse on Essex's left wing. An Irish gentleman, Sir Faithful Fortescue, who had come from Ireland with a body of horse, was against his will with the Parliamentary army, and, upon Rupert moving, he rode out with his men, joined the Royalists and charged with them. The Parliamentary horse broke at once, and, throwing into confusion a large body of infantry in their panic, galloped off the field. The Royalists thundered in pursuit, cutting down the fugitives, and finally sacking in the town of Kineton, where lay Essex's baggage. Thus was thrown away a great opportunity to break up the shaken infantry. By one contemporary writer the view was taken that Rupert could not have checked his wild troopers had he desired to do so; and one may recall the failure of 'the rigid huzzar' to keep back his regiments he wished to ride clear of down the North Valley; but I suppose it would be hard to find anything in Rupert's career to lend support to the view that he was likely to try to curb in his men on this occasion.<sup>1</sup> On the other side of the field Wilmot's smaller

<sup>1</sup> Unless it were his leadership at Chalgrove Field about eight months later, when, after beating in a slight affray the Parliamentary horse, he did refrain from a wild pursuit which, with Essex coming up, would have been very rash.

body of horse, moving on more difficult ground, were also successful against the Parliamentary horse, Sir Arthur Ashton especially doing notable service by beating off the musqueteers with his dragoons. Wilmot, like Rupert, went off in pursuit, carrying with him, it seems, the new commander-in-chief, Forth, who had placed himself with this wing of the Royalist army.

The Royalist foot-soldiers were thus completely deserted by the horse; even the King's own bodyguard came down the hill and joined in the chase. With Essex, on the contrary, a reserve of horse still remained. These men, led by Sir William Balfour, presently fell upon the Royalist infantry with great effect. Sir Edmund Verney, the 'stainless knight' of Clandon—who, heartily disliking the policy of Laud, and voting steadily with the opposition to it in Parliament, felt bound to come to the King's aid when war broke out—was killed. He, like Lindsey and Falkland, had predicted that he would find his death on the battlefield. The standard which he bore for the King was captured by the Parliamentarians and only recovered by an act of desperate daring by an officer of the horse, Captain John Smith, whom Charles in gratitude knighted on the field. Lindsey, leading his men, pike in hand, received his mortal wound. He was taken prisoner by the enemy, together with his son Montague, who strove to rescue him. Another account given by Lloyd in his *Memoirs* is that Montague voluntarily surrendered himself in order to attend his father. This second Earl of Lindsey played a prominent part in the war later on and at the Restoration. He was one of those Royalists who offered to die as a hostage for Charles I.<sup>1</sup>

Early in the afternoon of that Sunday—the battle did not begin till three o'clock—Lindsey had marched his men, the 'King's Red Regiment,' down the hill with the King's words in his ears, 'Go in the name of God, and I'll lay my bones by yours!'—a vow made with not less sincerity, if meant to be taken less literally, than that one in Browning's play, to which Strafford replies, 'Stay, Sire—stay—do not promise—do not swear!' Clarendon uses the word 'resentment' in regard to Lindsey's feelings when he learns that, by the arrangement with Rupert, he cannot any longer regard himself as general of the Royalist army. But his attitude on the day of Edgehill was one of sorrow,

<sup>1</sup>I have lately seen a good impression of Faithorn's fine line-engraving of Vandyke's Montague. The best known portrait of the first earl is Johnson's, engraved in 1742 by Houbbraken, later impressions of which are not very hard to procure. There is also a line-engraving of the portrait of the first earl by Geldorp.

rather than chagrin or bitterness. Charles's words were not spoken to an angry subject brooding over slights, but to a loyalist among loyalists still. Carried wounded from the field and laid in a barn, Lindsey was visited during the night by several of the chief officers of Essex. To them he spoke very distasteful words, reproaching Balfour in particular for his ingratitude in turning against the King, who had served his interests only too well by making him, disliked as he was, Governor of the Tower; and sending a message to Essex urging him, lest he should become odious hereafter as a traitor, to seek at once the pardon of the King for that day's work. There was little enough in this that savoured of a man bitter about, or dwelling on, his own private wrongs. The historian tells us that Lindsey's vehemence was so great, that one by one the officers withdrew. Essex himself did not visit Lindsey, so far as I can gather from contemporary chronicles; I do not know on what authority the writer of the interesting article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* relies when he says that Essex did visit Lindsey. Essex sent surgeons, but they came too late, and from loss of blood Lindsey died the night after the battle.

It is not at all likely that the dying man had the gratification of knowing that Edgehill in the end was not the rout for the King's forces which it must have appeared to be at the time he was carried off the field. One body of the Royalist foot stood firm, though latterly inactive, throughout the day, after the capture and abandonment, by necessity, of the Royalist guns by Balfour; whilst the troops led by Lindsey and Verney, though in the end broken, must have made a stubborn and long defence, for when Rupert and Wilmot, with the disorganised horse, returned in the evening, the Parliamentary army seems only to have been beginning some movement in the nature of a general advance. Though the Royalist cavalry had shot its bolt, and could not be induced by Falkland or by the King to charge again, it came up in time to check the victorious advance of the Parliamentary army. The fact seems to be that neither side at this point was clear how the other fared. The Parliamentary army may have been discouraged by the return of the triumphing squadrons of Rupert and Wilmot; whilst those squadrons returned to find the Parliamentary foot in good order and victorious, and were themselves too tired and disordered to rally for a fresh onset. So neither side would strike another blow, and both bivouacked on the field that night. There was a terrible frost, and the men lit and huddled round

what fires they could make with such scanty wood as was gathered in an open, exposed spot. The King himself, never wanting in the personal courage and endurance in hard times that his severest critics have recognised, himself spent the night with his soldiers on the field. The whole of next day the two armies again faced each other. On October 25 Essex's army left the field ; and a few days later, Essex retiring to Warwick to repair his force, the King was able to continue his march, taking Banbury Castle on his way to Oxford.

GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

IT is not easy to understand the complicated altercation between Mr. Israel Gollancz (the secretary, I believe, of L'Académie Britannique) and Mr. Parry. As far as the question reveals itself to me, Mr. Parry, several years ago, edited the *Letters of Dorothy Osborne* (1652-54), which had hitherto blushed unseen in MS. and in a private library. The British Museum later acquired the MSS., and then Mr. Israel Gollancz also edited the letters. But Mr. Parry objected 'Why crib my text and its arrangement, and some of its worst notes?' and the law, as far as it has gone, seems on the whole to side with Mr. Parry. It appears, darkly, that anyone may go to the Museum, and copy Mistress Osborne's letters afresh, and publish them, but that no one may take Mr. Parry's text, collate it with the original MSS. (correcting as he goes, I presume), and publish the results. For if such an editor reproduces an original blunder or misreading of Mr. Parry's, that error is Mr. Parry's copyright. Meanwhile Dr. Furnivall (whose joy is in battle) denies that Mr. Gollancz *has* ' cribbed the text of Mr. Parry and its arrangement, and some of its worst notes.' Thus the interested looker-on does not know what has really occurred, or what it is all about, but divines that a new editor of a MS. had better make a fresh copy thereof.

\* \* \*

It is exceedingly difficult to copy old letters quite correctly, and I think, from experience, that it would really be wiser for a new editor to make a complete new copy than to try to correct, by comparison with the originals, a copy already in print. I have tried the second plan in one case, or, rather, I had the process done for me, because I could not read the old hand myself. I also had the old letters photographed, and a learned friend, comparing my printed text with the photographs, made a vast number of minute corrections. They were of no great practical importance,

if of any, but, if an absolutely accurate transcript is wanted, the photographic plan is best. Even an exact copyist will unconsciously make alterations, and when the copy is printed, say in a work of history, the general public is sure to be misled by the copyist's blunders. It becomes necessary for the specialist to return to the original MS. document, which may be in St. Petersburg or Vienna, and thus endless trouble is given and historical and literary conclusions are vitiated. A slip of a single word in copying may be the basis of an important theory, and some hero of the past may lose his character through a slip, not of his own, but of a modern pen. The law, therefore, in its wisdom, insists that a fresh editor shall make a fresh copy.

\* \* \*

On one point a sense of some kind ought to protect writers whom the law does not protect. If A writes a life of anybody, say Burke, and finds a number of new facts in MSS. hitherto overlooked, B ought not to come at once and hurry out a new cheap little Life of Burke, containing all the plums of A's fresh discoveries. A's book may cost a couple of guineas, and B really should not, like little Jack Horner, put in his thumbs and pick out the plums, and vend them for half-a-crown. But there is nothing in the law of the land to prevent B from doing this thing, from printing the letters that A discovered, the anecdotes that he gleaned from family tradition, and even his very misprints. So B goes and does it.

\* \* \*

The pundits of Great Britain are not alone in creating for themselves an Academy. The movement spreads. In a newspaper advertisement I read, not without emotion :

**H**AIRDRESSERS' TRADE MEETING will be held at the PITMAN HOTEL, CORPORATION STREET, TUESDAY NEXT, March 3rd, 8.30 p.m., to continue promotion of a Hairdressing Academy.

A Hairdresser, too, may be an Academician.

\* \* \*

I am the least of all Dickensians, and not worthy to be called a Dickensian. But on one point I take leave to be firm. Dickens did not write, nor did Thackeray write, nor did either of them

improve *The Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*. The passage in which Mr. Sala recognised the hand of Thackeray, when the Bride's Mother 'never was heard to speak so free,' occurs in one of the old variants of the ballad published by Professor Child; and another similar text was recently taken down by a young lady from the lips of a blind old woman in a workhouse. 'G. S. L.' in *The Academy* (April 25) says that 'there is good evidence for supposing that Thackeray's hand is to be found, not only in the ballad itself, but in the even more delightful prose notes appended to it.' The notes, on internal evidence, have the air of being Thackeray's, but the ballad is throughout a degraded street version of the famous ancient piece. Anyone can ascertain this for himself by consulting the monumental edition of the English and Scottish Ballads, in ten volumes, edited by Professor Child. The Loving Ballad has no right to a place in the *Plays and Poems* of Charles Dickens, or of any modern. Nothing can be more certain. Only the spelling has been phonetically adapted to the cockney accent of 1840.

\* \* \*

The knowledge of *when* to sit down is invaluable to public speakers and to their audiences. Perhaps the best plan is to secure a candid friend who will pull you down by the coat-tails. A man 'on his legs' is one with whom Time gallops; he has spoken for half an hour, and to him it seems but five minutes. The excitement of the brain suggests new and ever new ideas, and the extemporary talker in the pulpit, or after a public dinner, flounders in pursuit of these will-o'-the-wisps, through swamps and thickets of bad grammar, haunted by the Anacolouthon and other fearful wildfowl. In the pulpit there is no man to pull the preacher down, and many are his 'two words more, my brethren.' After public dinners, a bored audience begins to talk and laugh, but these symptoms of disapproval are not marked by the self-absorbed public speaker. In short, the knowledge of *when* to sit down is rare, and hard to acquire.

\* \* \*

Yet most people might be expected to know *how* to sit down. This does not seem to be the opinion of the author of the following instructions in this art; I cull them from a Scottish society paper:

'There are a few everyday errors for which we may as well be

on the look-out. The first is the carriage of the body. When you stand, stand with the weight on the balls of the feet, and lift the chest up and out as though you were showing a diamond scarfpin. This simple act should bring every organ in the body into its proper relative position.

'The second is one which should be repeated again and again, for it is such a common fault, and leads to innumerable bad results. Do not sit upon the end of the spine. To avoid doing this, select, as far as possible, a chair to fit you, not too big nor too low, not too broad, and yet not too narrow; then, standing before it, bend the body (keeping the head still up) as though to sit on the lower part of the chair-back, settle down a little bit, and, if you have kept your chest position, there you are comfortably poised, with no fear of injuring that delicate bit of organism, the spine. Particularly would I warn you to keep this position when you sew, for a woman uses much unnecessary nerve tension at best when thus employed.'

\* \* \*

A celebrated philosopher has remarked, in private conversation, that we should all be fitted for our chairs. We ought to sit down on a bank of clay, and have our chairs cast from the personal mould. This is carrying Individualism to a very high degree. But, having merely selected a chair, we are to 'stand before it,' which suggests that we ought to face it, in an attitude of respect. And are we to face the back or the front of the chair? What portion of the body are we to 'bend, keeping the head still up'? Why on earth should we aim at 'sitting on the lower part of the chair-back'? I have never practised this method of sitting down, yet have never 'injured that delicate bit of organism, the spine,' except once. On that occasion I sat down, suddenly and involuntarily, with no preliminary observances, on the ice. A similar misfortune may happen to any pupil who possesses a younger brother. He is certain to pull away the chair while the neophyte is making the stately movements advised by the instructor. The neophyte will not 'keep her chest position' in this case, nor her temper, probably. On a wet day a lively family may get a good deal of amusement out of trying to obey the directions for sitting down. Why the 'second error' 'should be repeated again and again, for it is such a common fault, and leads to innumerable bad results,' does not appear. The less frequently you repeat a common fault, attended by numberless

disastrous consequences, the better. One might think 'much unnecessary nerve tension' (oh scientific slang!) ought to be avoided rather than courted.

\* \* \*

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Authors ought to 'extend its sphere,' if we may use a term familiar to mathematicians. Not the cruelty of insufficient emolument only should be checked. There are inflictions subtler and, to a lofty soul, more painful. The public regards the author as one who naturally possesses, without purchase, unlimited quantities of his own books. One result is that ladies eternally write to a man asking him to send heaps of his works, with autograph inscriptions, to be sold at bazaars. One may be, as I lately was, on a small and nearly desert island, where I had not one of my numerous works, but charitable ladies went at me all the same. I hate writing autograph inscriptions; I would rather write another book. Again, I never keep my own works in stock—few men do—and to buy them costs me just as much (I conceive) as it costs the public. Consequently, it is much cheaper in labour, worry, brown paper, string, and postage-stamps, with the man's time in licking them, to send a cheque to a charity than to go through all the complicated bother demanded by bazaar ladies. They do not even say 'Thank you!' after all—one did not, at least.

'The Countess her manners forgot,

as in the excellent song of 'Green Jean.' The result is that I, for one, will never again reply to the un-Christian demands of bazaar ladies.

\* \* \*

Other ladies—rich ones, too—beg for themselves. If they want a book, they just ask the author for it. I admire the novelist who, in face of such a request, presented the rich lady with four shillings and sixpence—the price (on the system of discount) of his romance. Other nuisances are the bores who daily ask a man to let them publish selections from his books for their own private benefit in volumes of their paste-and-scissors work. Why cannot they write their own books? One's time is devoured by writing replies to these gentry. As to editors and journalists who demand one's opinion on this or that, to compile therewith 'copy' for their own benefit, we ought not to answer

them at all. Authors should stand shoulder to shoulder against all pests of this kind. Union is strength. As long as some writers yield to these petitioners they will assail all writers. The Authors' Society might impose an oath on its members—a sacred vow never to reply to the public nuisances. As for the people who send their own undesired books, with requests, repeated at short intervals, for favourable reviews, they, too, ought to be left without reply. They do not understand the rules of the game.

\* \* \*

People who write to ask questions are not always intent on getting gratuitous copy; they sometimes 'want to know.' Thus Mr. Robert J. Thomson kindly sends me a book published by himself at Chicago, Ill., U.S.A., *The Proofs of Life after Death: A Twentieth-Century Symposium*. This volume is so far a genuine symposium, or 'wine,' in that it contains the replies of many persons to questions asked by Mr. Thomson about the future life. I do not remember answering, but no doubt I did, for my remark is in print. 'At present I think that there is a fair presumption that, in time, data for the formation of an opinion may be collected.' That does not commit me to very much! Dr. Lombroso (who believes that genius is a form of lunacy) writes: 'There is a great probability . . . that there is a continued existence of the soul after death, preserving a weak identity, to which the persistent soul can add new life and growth from the surrounding media.' This is not very cheerful! I don't think, were I a soul, that I should trouble myself about sucking new life out of surrounding media, whatever they may be. Perhaps Dr. Lombroso is chaffing? Dr. Scozzi believes in a fluidical body, which 'has also been photographed.' There must also be fluidical clothes—an old puzzle. The 'fluidical body' is also known to Dr. Scozzi as 'the soul.' Those who would know more must read the Doctor's book *Medianita*. Much the most interesting writer is Professor Charles Richet, because he has seen series of minor miracles in four several sets of experiments with the same medium. In a fifth set the medium was detected in many acts of imposture, but M. Richet believes in the other four sets. He is really and undeniably a man of science; he found himself compelled, against his will, to believe, and he analyses in a curious way the tendency of his mind to slip back into disbelief. The facts, he admits, were 'absurd,' and were

dimly observed in semi-darkness; yet M. Richet believes—at the moment—and begins to disbelieve next day. At present he is convinced, but thinks that his conviction may relapse into disbelief, owing to 'the inexorable strength of prepossession.' This is a very curious condition of mind, though it is much more easy to understand the professor's disbelief than his belief. I find that the medium was never caught out when M. Richet himself was present, but he does not dispute that she was caught out. How he can believe in her after that is a mystery to the non-scientific mind. However, the whole affair has really nothing to do with the future life.

\* \* \*

The most childish proof of a future life is this. A Mrs. Livermore was asked by a medium, pretending to speak for her late husband, 'if she remembers the Browning I gave her before I came here?' Many men have given their wives a 'Browning'; what Mrs. Livermore remembered was that Dr. Livermore 'tried to read Robert Browning, but found him too obscure.' But he had, in 1845, given her a book by *Mrs.* Browning, and this is taken as a proof that Dr. Livermore is communicating through a medium! If he was, and if he meant *Mrs.* Browning, he would have *said* '*Mrs.* Browning.' Nobody calls a volume of *Mrs.* Browning 'a Browning.' One does not like to quote the patent absurdities, tales of productions of casts of the hands, feet, and faces of 'temporarily formed spiritual beings,' asserted by one of the most distinguished of living men of science. One writer speaks of my private 'theory of the origins of religion' as 'the ghost theory,' whereas, in my humble works, I have tried to show that 'the ghost theory' is *not* 'the origin of religions,' that religion has quite a different origin. 'The ghost theory' is the property of other and greater philosophers: not that the savage belief in ghosts has failed to play its part in one large province of early religion.

\* \* \*

The Correctors of the Press are gentlemen to whom all scribblers owe much in various ways. Occasionally the debt is of a humorous kind. The corrector, not understanding the author, introduces conjectural emendations which are productive of general mirth and good-humour. On other occasions the corrector is very particular about grammar; mine, I know, is frequently

and deservedly castigated. I cannot honestly say that correctors are as particular about dates. Arabic numerals yield infinite chances of trouble ; a century is jumped by the change of a single cipher, and a gentleman very active in 1580 is found to lose his head on the block in 1681. I am busy at this hour with a curious problem, the death of Amy Robsart, in which a letter of September 12 occurs. The letter has often been printed, and the date correctly given ; but in 1859 a writer, uncorrected, gave September 27 instead of 12. From this author 27 got into Mr. Froude's History, and thence percolated into other works, with the most singular results. In another case I read 'it was many heads that the Queen would marry Lord Robert.' Naturally one supposed that 'it was many heads' meant 'it was long odds.' Here seemed to be an Elizabethan sporting expression. I was quite content, but the real phrase ran 'it was *in* many heads'—that is, 'many people thought that the Queen would marry Lord Robert.' Here the corrector had not been wide awake.

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In the printed report of the dinner of the London Association of Correctors of the Press one is not sure whether the gentleman who corrected the report, or Sir Gilbert Parker, or the reporter is wrong, or whether one is painfully ignorant. Sir Gilbert is said to have spoken of 'the sub-editor with Damastian measure.' What is a Damastian measure ? Who was Damastes ? A Procrustean measure we all understand, from the story of the Bed of Procrustes, but Damastian puzzles me. Sir Gilbert declared that 'the fate of his split infinitives lay in the hands of the correctors.' But I do not see that, if Sir Gilbert indulges in split infinitives, the corrector is bound to put them right. He generally leaves them as he finds them.

\* \* \*

Sir Douglas Straight said that the corrector 'had to know practically everything.' An ideal corrector would, but he would soon soar above correcting. Nobody knows everything ! Lately I had occasion to write about Colkitto, mentioned in a sonnet of Milton. A commentator on Milton, an Anglican Bishop—who did not know everything—declared that Colkitto was an eminent Presbyterian divine ! He was really Mac Coll (or Col) Ceotach, the son of Left-handed (or ambidextrous ?) Coll. I wrote of him

as Col Ceotach. The corrector, by a conjecture, made him 'Colonel Ceotach,' knowing that 'Col.' is short for 'Colonel,' but not knowing Gaelic. Sir Douglas justly remarked on the extraordinary correctness of the printing in our newspapers—that is, in many of them. It seems to me to be much more accurate than in American newspapers. There are exceptions: in one literary weekly paper, last month, three enormous blunders occurred in one short paragraph.

\* \* \*

Mr. Randall, speaking for the Association, made a valuable suggestion. 'Let the press reader go over the copy in the first instance and prepare it.' This would 'save a reader's salary twice over in the cost of corrections.' Newspaper 'copy' cannot well be type-written in the first place. It is odd that there are usually fewer errors in copy printed even from bad handwriting (I ought to know) than from type-written copy. The typist gets in a class of minute blunders which escape author and corrector.

\* \* \*

*Wisdom on Hire* is even more amusing than *Wisdom While You Wait*.<sup>1</sup> Here are two shilling's-worths of the most irresponsible high spirits and abounding nonsense. The artists have worked in full sympathy with the authors. The exquisite simplicity of 'Gothic Shelter for Sheep,' 'Shepherd at Work,' and 'Scene in Kensington Gardens' may be lacking in the illustrations of the later volume. Here we find the more elaborate pathos of 'Bringing Home the Winner,' and the *pas seul*, so vigorously joyous, of Mr. A. J. Balfour. The mystery of the final design, 'The Grave of the Unsuccessful Competitor,' 'I know, but may not tell.'

\* \* \*

A nobler competition than that of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* may be recommended to the philanthropic proprietors. The *Insidecompleteuar* is not the *Uptodateuar*. It is not devoid of corrigible errors. Prizes might be offered to purchasers of the volumes who can correct most blunders. I myself would offer a copy of this magazine to the gentleman or lady who first detects the incomparable 'howler' in the first page of the

<sup>1</sup> Isbister.

account of Sir Walter Scott in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Oh, Sir Leslie Stephen! We do all err, but *this* error is 'an imperial crowner.' Yet perhaps only a Borderer (among persons not professional historians or genealogists) would have found it out.

\* \*

A bookseller offers Scott's Latin Grammar (1774) with autograph, 'Walter Scott, Junr.' for—58*l.* 10*s.* 'Many years ago' it was offered for 2*l.* 2*s.* And is not that quite enough? Who says 58*l.* 10*s.*? Not a canny Scot, I suspect. There is room for the pleasing remark of a Bishop conducting, extemporarily, a Three Hours' Service in Holy Week: 'We now reach a delightful episode, that of the Penitent Thief.' What an imagination this worthy prelate must possess! Presbyterian eloquence cannot rival 'this delightful episode,' full of idyllic charm.

ANDREW LANG.

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